WORLD / A24

US protests Chinese harassing its ship in int'l waters

WORLD / A24

Scholars find new, 'more handsome' Shakespeare portrait

NEWS / A9

Defense Secretary Teodoro says he'll run for president

LIFESTYLE / D1

Pacquiao on parenting: I give them what they want for I had nothing

Legacy's Ford Expedition abandoned

By Marlen Ramos

WHY WOULD ANYONE ABANDON A sport utility vehicle (SUV) which could easily fetch the price of a small house?

Police investigators posed this question after they briefly held a man who tried to leave the SUV in front of the main office of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. (PDIC) in Makati City early Tuesday.

The green Ford Expedition (Plate No. WRZ 195), a scrawl mid, was the SUV that

LEGACY'S / A10

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Wednesday, March 11, 2009 ★★ 7 sections / Vol. 24 / No. 93 P18 www.inquirer.net

Cops arrest motorist using Speaker's No. 4

ALL HE NEEDED WAS A security convoy or a blazing siren—and no one would have dared block his way.

The highway patrol yesterday arrested a motorist and impounded

COP'S ARREST / A10

SEC exec told: Take leave

But Enrile wants all 5 commissioners sacked

By Christian Esguerra, Norman Bordadora and Christine Avendaño

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO YESTERDAY ordered Commissioner Jesus Martinez of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to go on leave following revelations that he received a house and lot worth P5 million and P1.4 million in cash from the Legacy Group.

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile also said he wanted SEC Chair Fe Barin and the four commissioners, including Martinez, to quit because of the SEC's mishandling of three shattered Legacy pension firms, which owe P2.1 billion to some 90,000 plan holders.

"Martinez should go on leave immediately to ensure an impartial investigation by the SEC and other investigative bodies of the charges against him," Press Secretary Cerge Remonde said.

Martinez, however, is set to retire this week.

The Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC) yesterday said it was racing to file an ad-

SEC EXEC / A10

WHEELING AND DEALING The story in the Senate hearing is that this Ford Expedition worth P1.415 million was sold by the son of SEC Commissioner Jesus Martinez to the son of Cebu ex-Gov Angeles, owner of the bankrupt Legacy Group. But the witnesses at the hearing claim that this vehicle was acquired by Legacy's Rural Bank of San Jose but was being used by Ex-Gov Angeles. On Tuesday, it conveniently turns up at the parking lot of the Philippine Insurance Deposit Corp. in Makati City. PHOTO/FROM VIDEO

2 Garcia sons still in US jail despite posting $2-M bail

TWO SONS OF FORMER MILITARY comptroller Carlos Garcia who were arrested last month are still in US custody despite an earlier court ruling allowing each of them to post bail of $1 million.

Ian Carl Garcia, 30, and Juan Paolo Garcia, 27—both American citizens—are facing charges of bulk cash smuggling for attempting to slip $100,000 from Manila into San Francisco in 2003.

On March 6, US District Court Judge Thelton Henderson overturned a March 5 decision by Chief Magistrate Judge James Larson not to detain the brothers on $1-million bond each, according to a report by the ABS-CBN North America Bureau-San Francisco.

Jack Gilleael, spokesperson of the US Attorney's Office in Northern California, was quoted in the report as saying that after the arraignment, US Attorney Philip Kearney "filed an appeal

2 GARCIA / A4

PHOTOGRAPHED BY FRANCIS MAGALONA This one is of Clara, 8, the youngest of his eight children. His colleagues in the Camera Club of the Philippines attend to his passion for photography. His every shot carries a story. Magdalena is to be cremated today. (Story on Page B1)

Shooting with the 'master photographer'

By Leo Rilegen
Contributor

MY FRIENDSHIP WITH FRANCIS MAgalona started with photography.

I met him in a concert tour for DFWs in Amsterdam in 2006. In one of the luncheons sponsored by the embassy, I noticed that he was literally shooting between meals, standing up and hovering with his camera, shooting people around him and the scenery.

I introduced myself to him as a fellow enthusiast and invited him to join our photo club. That started our friendship and ignited his love for photography.

SHOOTING / A8

Aurora cadet tops PMA 09 class; lone girl in top 10

BAGUIO CITY—A CADET FROM Aurora who entered the Philippine Military Academy to fulfill his father's failed childhood dream of becoming a soldier will lead this year's graduating PMA Mandirigma class.

As the top graduate, Cadet First Class Karl Winston Gacutandin, 23, will receive the Presidential Saber from President Macapagal-Arroyo during commencement exercises on March 14 at Fort del Pilar here.

Cadet First Class Cynthia Formoso, who ranked ninth, is the only female cadet who made it among the top 10 graduating cadets this year.

Other cadets at the top of the class are Cadets First Class Lemuel Mandolo, Roger Flores, Nelson Liwanag, Larry Mayos, Erick Mabborang, Carlito Santiago, Glen de Ramos, and Christopher Dapalen.

Although his family had yet

AURORA / A4

Monsod: Beware of automated cheating

By Kristine L. Alave

GLITCHES IN THE HASTE TO automate could lead to computerized cheating in the 2010 balloting, former Commission on Elections Chair Christian Monsod warned yesterday.

Speaking at a press forum on Tuesday, Monsod said that while he favored election automation this should be implemented in stages because of inadequacies in the Comelec infrastructure to support the Precinct Optical Counting Scan (PCOS) system.

Because the Comelec does

MONSOD / A5

Pinay caregiver dies in Canada, reaps praise, inspires law

By Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

JOANA TEJADA, A FILIPINO WHOSE plight as a caregiver inspired her supporters to name a proposed Canadian law after her, has died in Toronto. She was 40.

Tejada died of complications resulting from colon cancer. The disease, which struck her when she was on her third year in Canada, had prevented a move to have her deported.

She died on Sunday, March 8, International Women's Day.

PINAY / A6

Russian sees end of American Dream

By Philip C. Tubeza

THIS AUTUMN WILL SEE THE start of the United States' "disintegration," according to the dean of Russia's diplomatic academy.

Speaking yesterday through an interpreter at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, Igor Panarin said that with the financial crisis worsening in the United States, the

RUSSIAN / A5

26 YEARS AGO Then Capt. Felipe Valerio in the Dec. 15, 1983, issue of Phi. and Ms. Special Edition, PDI's forerunner.

Where in the world is Captain Valerio?

By Christian V. Esguerra

WHERE IS FELIPE VALERIO JR.?

Is he the missing link to the brains behind the murder of Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr.?

A former Philippine Air Force captain, Valerio was one of the principal accused in the celebrated murder on Aug. 21, 1983, of the foremost opposition leader during the Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship.

Valerio had testified during the fact-finding investigation of the commission headed by Corazon Agrava, but reportedly flew to the United States and disappeared before he could be indicted in the murders of Aquino and fall guy Rolando Galman.

When the Sandiganbayan handed down its decision on Sept. 26, 1990, Valerio was neither convicted nor acquitted because the court had no jurisdiction over him.

Last week, the New Bilibid Prison emptied its cells of the last 10 soldiers convicted in the slayings of Aquino and Galman.

Their double-life sentences were commuted by President Macapagal-Arroyo who ordered them freed.

Six other soldiers also found guilty in the Aquino-Galman case had either died in prison or released earlier.

WHERE / A6

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The eastern section of Northern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with light rain while the western portion of Luzon will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with occasional rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Partly cloudy	Kalibo/Boracay	Partly cloudy
Baguio	Partly cloudy	Roxas	Partly cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly cloudy	Cebu	Partly cloudy
Laoag	Partly cloudy	Tacloban	Mostly cloudy
Cabo Engaño	Partly cloudy	San Jose/Mindoro	Partly cloudy
Vigan/Ilog	Partly cloudy	Dumaguete/Siquijor	Partly cloudy
Legaspi	Partly cloudy	Zamboanga/Jolo	Partly cloudy
Catbalogan	Partly cloudy	Davao	Mostly cloudy

E-mail: pc_news@inquirer.com.ph Website: www.inquirer.net/main

EZ2*
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SUERTRES*
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SIX DIGIT*
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6/42 LUZ-VIS-MIN
6 8 24 25 30 38
P4,363,504.20

SUPERLOTTO 6/49
10 24 25 28 33 42
P44,613,878.40

Mancao named names–Gonzalez

Affidavit will pin down 'brains' of Dacer-Corbito slays, says DOJ chief

By TJ Burgonio and Erika Sauler

CLARK FREEPORT—FORMER police officer Cesar Mancao's affidavit would be sufficient to prove the guilt of the mastermind of the killing of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito, an administration official said yesterday.

"Yes, if you're asking me," Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez told reporters in an ambush interview here, but he added that it would be up to the courts to assess its evidentiary value.

"But I won't be the judge," he added.

Gonzalez also said Mancao, whose affidavit reportedly links ranking government officials to the double murder, was qualified to be a state witness and would get state protection.

He declined, however, to discuss the affidavit in detail.

"There were names mentioned but I can't give you the details because it would be premature," Gonzalez said as he walked to a Cabinet meeting at Cyber City Telecenter presided over by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Five names

In a later press briefing, Gonzalez said Mancao had named more than five government officials in the killing of Dacer and Corbito.

"Several names were mentioned, but some of them had nothing to do with it. They were just people who were part of a group," he said.

"They are alive," was all he would say when asked if they were sitting officials. He refused to comment when asked if there were senators among them.

Mancao and 21 others face double murder charges in Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 136.

They were accused of the abduction of Dacer and Corbito from the corner of Ortigas Highway and Zobel Roxas Street in Manila on Nov. 24, 2000, and their murder after the evasion of the two were found strangled, burned and buried in Cavite a month later.

Dacer was a prominent public relations practitioner who counted the high and mighty among his friends and clients.

He had apparently crossed someone very powerful.

Mancao spoke with Dacer's daughter, Katrina, during an extradition hearing in Florida where he told her he had executed an affidavit identifying the masterminds and perpetrators of the twin killings, according to Dacer family lawyer Demetrio Custodio.

Home in 3 weeks

Mancao also told the federal district court in Fort Lauderdale that he would not be contesting his extradition but would be flying back to Manila in three weeks.

In the briefing, Gonzalez said that if he were a judge, Mancao's affidavit would be sufficient to establish guilt or at least probable cause for the filing of charges against the mastermind and perpetrators.

"If I were the judge, that would be sufficient on at least to establish probable cause to charge [people] in court. But it will be the judge that will determine guilt or innocence ... whether that will suffice to establish guilt beyond reasonable doubt," he said.

Mancao's affidavit is being kept in a bank vault and its contents will be divulged when the former senior superintendent arrives in Manila, Gonzalez said.

Following Mancao's execution of an affidavit, the prosecution would most likely opt to reopen an investigation of the case in the Department of Justice rather than continue with the trial in the Manila RTC, Custodio said yesterday.

"If I say why, I would be revealing the contents of the affidavit. So it's because of the affidavit," Custodio told the Inquirer.

State prosecution

Gonzalez said Mancao spoke to him on the phone in February to ask if his affidavit would clear him in the case and if he could get state protection.

"His concerns were his security and, of course, his chance to qualify as a state witness ... if he will be cleared of charges as far as the Dacer-Corbito case is concerned. If he's involved in the Kuratong Baleleng case, he's not cleared," Gonzalez said.

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Ex-solon asks court to review graft case

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

FORMER SENATOR NED Nereus Acosta asked the Sandiganbayan to suspend the proceedings in the graft cases against him, his mother and his aunt, saying the Office of the Ombudsman, which had filed the cases, ignored their defense.

He also asked the court to review the resolutions filed by the Office of the Ombudsman against him and his relatives.

Acosta, his mother Soledad and his aunt Nenita Gonzalez had been accused of allotting funds from his pork barrel to two nongovernmental organizations where his father, mother and aunt serve as incorporators. The fund allocation allegedly happened between 2001 and 2002.

In one of his motions, Acosta expressed concern that the "[O]ffice of the Ombudsman grossly ignored their defense and the numerous documents appended to their pleadings, choosing instead to adopt the allegations of the complaints as the truth."

The cases were raffled to the Fourth Division of the Sandiganbayan but Acosta and his relatives claimed in two other motions they had yet to receive official copies of the resolutions.

They told the court they intend to appeal the findings of the Office of the Ombudsman as "part of due process."

Pending their motion for reconsideration, the court should suspend the proceedings in the meantime, the Acosta said.

HONGKONG $298 MACAU
AUSTRALIA $708 NEPAL $928
BANGKOK $175 SHANGHAI $329
SINGAPORE $235 SIEMREAP $699
HUTAN $317 HOLYLAND $2490
JAPAN $798
WORLD WINGS
INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURS CORPORATION

Early end of monsoon means longer summer

By Alcuin Papa

RAGE YOURSELVES.

It will be a long, hot summer, according to the weather bureau.

Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) chief Nathaniel Cruz said that since the monsoon had an early start, that could only mean summer will linger a little longer.

The last April usually ends around the second week of May.

Last Feb. 25, Cruz announced the official start of summer when Pagasa detected that the northeast monsoon, the cold air from the northern hemisphere that has entered the country since October, has stopped blowing early this month.

When this happens, warmer air from the Philippine Sea and the Pacific starts to come in, bringing in hot weather.

Pagasa said the minimum temperature in Metro Manila yesterday was 23.3 degrees centigrade recorded at 7:50 p.m. Relative humidity was registered at 96 percent. So far, the hottest day in Metro Manila was March 6 at 36 degrees centigrade.

According to the agency's website, temperatures across the country will range from 22 degrees to 36 degrees centigrade for the next three days.

Two weather systems are still affecting the country. There is the diffused rail-end of a cold front affecting the eastern sections of Northern Luzon. Air Masses and Windstreams, an easterly wave, or a low pressure area moving east to west, affecting the eastern parts.

A cold front occurs when cold and warm air mass until from clouds. Easterly waves are low pressure areas moving east to west causing cloudiness and thunderstorms.

Corrections

IN THE MARCH 2 ISSUE, AN ARTICLE on Page E1 of the Learning section—"Flight pilot"—misspelled the last name of the head of Philippine Airlines Learning Center. The head of the center is Jose Ushurtam—not Ushuntua.

* * *

IN THE MARCH 6 ISSUE, a front-page window misstated the headline of Ruben S. Seguiso' column "Only in Hollywood" that appeared on Page C6 of the Entertainment section. The headline in the front-page window should have read—as in Seguiso's column "Hollywood": Huge surprise!"—not "Felicity Huffman leaving 'Desperate Housewives': Huge surprise!"

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, an article on Page A2—"Marcos no Lenedo, other rebuilds Moreno, say more"—misstated the first name of the lawyer of the Duterte family. The lawyer of the Duterte family is Demecio Custodio.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, an article on Page A17 of the Asiana this Philippine section—"Iranian eludes 'fatwa' survivor"—misstated the term the Jehovah Witnesses encountered. The encounter occurred in 1966...not 1947.

* * *

THE SAME ARTICLE misnamed the surname of a military officer involved in the Jehovah Massacre. His name is Bibal Sebastio Maravillosa...not Maravillosa.

* * *

THE SAME ARTICLE also misspelled the name of an island in Tawi-Tawi. The island is Simunul—not Simanul.

* * *

IN THE MAR. 9 ISSUE, the front-page banner story—"P600M siphoned off Legacy fund"—misstated the surname of one of the Legacy fund officials. The Legacy official is Immaculate Panelo-Santos—not Sindaculas Panlo.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, an article on Page F1 of the Entertainment section—"Maestro wants to make fun pa jan pried"—misspelled the name of a funeral parlor. The funeral parlor is La Funeraria...not Fenerio...Ibn.

Tamayo; 65

EDUARDO DIAZ TAMAYO III[illegible] on March 6 at age 65. He is survived by wife Lita; children Cathy, Ricky, Randy, Betty and Rizaldy; siblings Julie, Letty, Amado, Fred, Cita, Adelia, Lau, Rhody and Lito; and grandchildren. His remains lie at 2098 Lacap, Calamias, Pangasinan. Interment will be on March 14, after the 8 a.m. Mass at the Calamias Cemetery.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, March 11, 2009
1st Week of Lent
Ember day: Ember Friday

1st Reading: Jer 18:18-20
Gospel: Mt 20:17-28

When Jesus was going to Jerusalem, he took the Twelve aside and said to them on the way, "See, we are going to Jerusalem. There the Son of Man will be given over to the chief priests and the teachers of the Law who will condemn him to death. They will hand him over to the foreigners who will mock him, scourge him and crucify him. But he will be raised to life on the third day." Then the mother of James and John came to Jesus with her sons, and she knelt down to ask a favor. Jesus said to her, "What do you want?" And she answered, "Here you have my two sons. Grant that they may sit, one at your right and one at your left, when you are in your kingdom."

Jesus said to the brothers, "You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup that I am about to drink?" They answered, "We can." Jesus replied, "You will indeed drink my cup, but to sit at my right or at my left is not for me to grant. That will be for those for whom the Father has prepared it."

The other ten heard all this and were angry with the two brothers. Then Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the pagans lord it over them, and the powerful oppress them. It shall not be so among you; whoever wants to be more important in your group shall make himself your servant, and if you want to be first, make yourself the servant of all. He who is the Son of Man will be the servant, and not be served. Just as never and to give his life to redeem many."

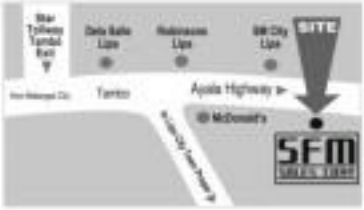
Commentary:

Jesus questioned James and John about what they thought of their future sufferings. He assured them that glorious suffering is a far, far cry from it to be drunk, but that it is not necessarily the cup of poison. It is crimes drought, but, in the mortal scheme of things, it is more required. Suffering for Christ is a sign, by which we are joined to Him in covenant and communion.

The disciples didn't understand what Jesus' sufferings would lead for themselves. It's always the way: those who are constantly most confident of enduring suffering are usually the least ready for it. But, the person, who labors most diligently and suffers most patiently, most resembles Christ. The suffering and death of Jesus cause a sacrifice for the sins of humankind; it was a reason for many and enough for all. And so, being a sacrifice for others, from our fearful, trembling soul does well to know there was a sacrifice, fulfilled for us!

Welcome to our new Showroom in Lipa, Batangas!

Mitsubishi Motors Philippines congratulates SFM Sales Corporation on the inauguration of its new showroom located in Lipa City, Batangas.



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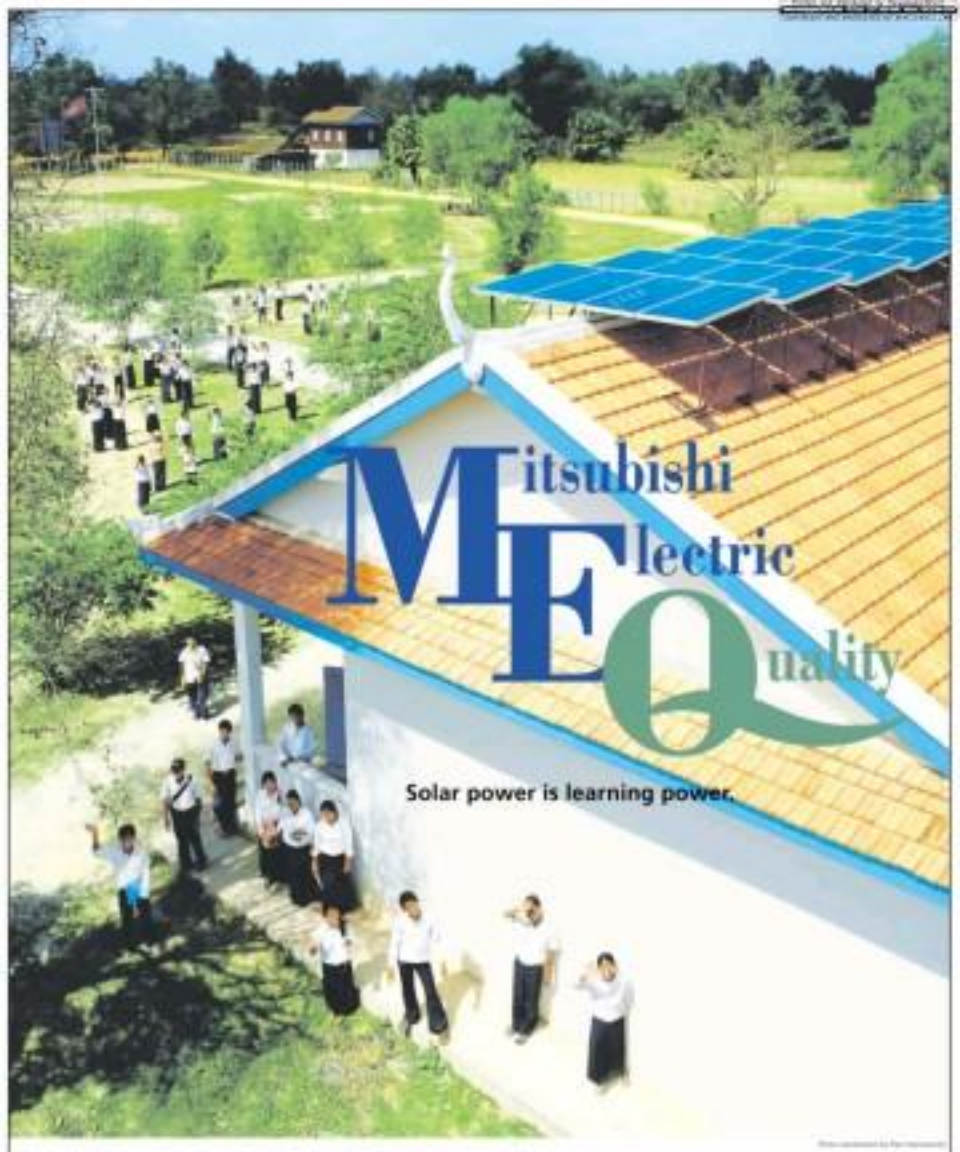

Mitsubishi Electric solar technology helps provide energy to places where electricity is scarce.

Solar power generates electricity for computer classes.

Not far from one of the most visited sites on earth, Angkor Wat, sits a small junior high school attended daily by 500 students. The school has no electric power, but it does have computer classes. On the roof, 36 Mitsubishi Electric solar panels convert enough sunlight to electricity, about 3.5 kW, to power the school's eight computers.

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http://www.MitsubishiElectric.asia/

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Loren slams 'hybrid' polls as utter waste of tax money

By Michael Lim Ubac

A MOVE IN THE HOUSE OF Representatives to push for "hybrid election" if full automation cannot be achieved in the 2010 polls has prompted head scratching among some Senators.

Sen. Loren Legarda yesterday called it "utter waste of taxpayers' money" the additional P2 billion proposed by the House to cover the cost of holding automated balloting for elective national posts and manual voting for local positions.

Speaker Prospero Nograles said the hybrid election bill filed by Rep. Pedro Garcia of Cebu was requested so he takes up it the plenary when Congress resume from a Lenten break next month.

Nograles said it was a fallback should the Commission on Elections fail to meet its deadline for automation.

"It's absurd to be spending more for the hybrid election system. Let us emphasize, though, that the automated system should be guarded every step of the way as it is not fraud-proof," Legarda said.

She noted that the P2 billion that would be needed for a hybrid poll would be on top of the P11.2 billion which both houses of Congress approved last month to fund computerized elections on May 10, 2010.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said that the Garcia bill "complicates, rather than solve issues."

"Without running mates, or assuming anyone if they want manual polls for local posts, then probably least some kind of way to manage results to ensure election of their 'preferences,'" Pimentel said.

As to concerns that only the Filipino companies have the technology at present for automated poll counting, she said that the important thing was to have safeguards against fraud.

"We must be assured that the poll system is not hackable," she said. "I was a victim of massive cheating in 2004 and I know how terrible and quick to adopt election cheats are."

Legarda was beaten by fellow broadcaster Noli de Castro in the vice presidential race. She protested the vote, but lost the case in the Supreme Court.

Monsod: Beware of automated cheating

From page A1

not have enough IT experts to oversee the 200 E-polls, Monsod feared that the poll body could lend wear the responsibilities of counting and canvassing to "software specialists" who can manipulate the results.

"Why don't we be careful and be more conservative in upgrade? We should do it in stages," Monsod said, "because there could be many possible problems that could happen to a one step, full-fledged nationwide automated election."

"A few software specialists can be a real deadly threat in automation," Monsod said, noting that previous elections proved that tampering of the results can be done by few people.

"It is possible to automate the cheating," he said.

The Comelec has decided to use the PCOS system in the 2010 national and presidential elections, where voters will mark specially printed ballots and feed them to machines which will then count and record their choices.

The system also allows for the transmittal of the results from the precinct to canvassing centers.

No fool-proof system

"There is no system in the world that is fool-proof. The Comelec should be careful in impressing on the public that once we go into automation, we should not worry about cheating anymore," Monsod said.

He said the Comelec should institute safeguards to ensure that the results are accurate and can be checked by interested parties.

He proposed a software where a draft election return (ER) will be printed soon after the Board of Election Inspectors (BEI) has uploaded the results to the servers.

"The draft ER would be compared to the hard copy of ER that would be signed by BEI and the opposition, if it is the same, if there is a need of canvassing, that draft ER can be corrected against the manual," Monsod said.

Open election system

Monsod said the Comelec should consider using the open election system, which is espoused by some local information technology experts, saying it is the most transparent way to cast and count the votes.

"We believe we must retain the most transparent portions of the present election which is manual voting and precinct counting which takes only 24 hours," Monsod said.

Canvassing could be done electronically and the final-only results would be uploaded on the Internet, ODS advocates said.

The system, which was developed by University of the Philippines engineers and programmers, is not proprietary and is cheaper than the PCOS, its supporters also said.

Monsod said the P11.2-billion tag price for automation was too steep, noting that the Comelec would have the ORS at P8 billion.

ARMM polls not a guide

Even though the testing of the voting and counting machines in the August 2008 elections in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) was relatively successful, the Comelec should not use it as a benchmark, Monsod said.

He noted that the ARMM balloting was a "controlled environment" and did not have the complications that may arise in a national exercise.

"We all know that the ARMM elections was not enough public for national implementation because it had no opposition candidates and the protest cases have yet to be tested," Monsod stressed.

He also sought to allay fears by Comelec Chair Jose Melo that ORS advocates would challenge in the Supreme Court the poll body's decision to use PCOS.

"We will never bring this issue to the court. We just want to raise our concern. We believe we must trust, up to a certain point, most of us have our reservations, the Comelec because it is there that is mandated by law," Monsod said.

Melo said a complaint could delay the bidding for the service provider and force the Comelec to abandon automation.

Commissioner Rene Sarmiento said the Comelec en banc would consider Monsod's concerns.

Sarmiento also said next year's exercise would be transparent. He said that as in the past, candidates and parties would be allowed inside the precincts as observers.

The Comelec has expressed hopes that computerizing the voting and canvassing process will lessen human intervention and discourage the wholesale tampering of results, which has marred past poll exercises.

2 Garcia sons still in US jail despite posting $2-M bail

From page A1

to keep the Garcia brothers in custody and away."

The brothers were told to leave their hotel overnight until the release order was officially overturned the next day.

They were earlier indicted by a federal grand jury in San Francisco and subsequently charged with conspiracy to commit bulk cash smuggling, failing to file a report on the import of monetary instruments, and making a false statement to a government agency.

Along with their parents and eldest Garcia son, the brothers are also facing plunder charges in the Philippines for amassing P303 million in questionable wealth.

Their father is being held in Camp Crame. Their mother, Gloria Depadolodto Garcia, and youngest brother, Timothy Mark Garcia—also American citizens—are in custody in Detroit and New York, respectively.

Economic clout

In Manila, Secretary Sec. Robin Gelo said the reported passing of $1.5 million bail each by Jan Carl and Juan Paulo Garcia boosted suspicion that their father was a force for economic clout in the Philippines.

Either that, or the "enormous" amount was the family's way of showing the kind of resources it had, Gelo said.

He cited speculations that Carlos Garcia might be acting for someone in the AFP or the Department of National Defense (DND), and said recent developments boosted such talk.

"By posting bail of the private is one of $1 million each for the two sons, the Garcias showed without doubt their economic clout. Or there is truth to the talk that Garcia is just fronting for someone within the AFP-DND establishment who benefited a lot from the [military] reinvestment that allegedly happened during his and his predecessor's time," Gelo said in a text message.

Gelo said the person that Carlos Garcia might be fronting for could have posted the $2 million for the sons' temporary liberty.

"Conversion" to a military term for the process of transforming all combat arms units, in collusion with suppliers and officials involved in the procurement process.

Carlos Garcia was recently found guilty of perjury for failure to declare his assets and liabilities in 2000.

Disrupting lives

Judge Lawson was quoted in the ABS-CBN report as having said that he did not want to dictate Jan Carl and Juan Paulo Garcia because he did not want to disrupt their normal lives as college students.

The brothers are detained at the South County Jail in Oakland, California, according to Jan Carl Garcia's lawyer, Richard Tamos.

"[They] are not in good spirits, but they're as good as they can possibly get given their situation," Tamos said.

Juan Paulo Garcia's counsel, Julia Mechtenberg, here, said the brothers avoid further bail pending their detention hearing on March 12 before Magistrate Judge Edward Chen.

The brothers are also to attend a hearing on bulk cash smuggling before Judge Phyllis Hamilton on March 18.

Clarita Garcia's detention hearing scheduled for March 16 was postponed by the US District Court for the eastern district of Michigan, the report said. With a report from Leila B. Salaverria

Aurora cadet tops PMA '09 class; lone girl in top 10

From page A1

to receive an official word on Caramielle's feat on Tuesday, Fortunato Caramielle, the cadet's father, said he was "very, very happy" about his eldest son's achievement in the country's premiere military training school.

It was his third and youngest son, Paul Vern, a third class cadet (second year) at the PMA, who broke the news of Karl Winston's achievement to their parents.

The good news, Fortunato said, was shouted by undress.

Karl Winston's grandmother, Nicanora, 73, died on Monday. The brothers have yet to go home.

But Hortensano said Victoria would have been proud of her grandson.

"You could sense that he did not like to study at PMA. Six months later, he was still hesitant. But after a year, he eventually adjusted to the life of a PMA cadet," Hortensano said in 10 years, recalling his son's initial resistance and eventually acceptance of a military career.

He was wanted to be a civil engineer at first.

Hortensano insisted in his dreams of seeing his sons become soldiers to serve the country.

Fortunato never got a chance to be a soldier because he married young. His elder brother, Lauro, is a master sergeant in the Philippine Air Force. Three of Lauro's sons are in the AFP as well.

Valedictorian

Karl Winston graduated valedictorian in elementary and high school in Barangay Maidel in Baler, Aurora, to enable town to move.

His mother, Eleanor, is a public high school teacher. Karl intends to serve in the municipal government's engineering office.

He said his son might have made it because he was persistent.

"When he can't get his assignments right, he really motivates it to their are done well," Fortunato said. Tonette Orejas, reporter Cynthia Luzon, with a report from Nestor Cuñeras, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Pinay caregiver dies in Canada, reaps praise, inspires law

From page A1

The pending legislation would benefit foreign caregivers in Canada who may find themselves in her situation.

Citing humanitarian reasons and Tejada's dedication to her work, thousands of Filipinos and non-Filipinos in Canada, the Philippines and other countries supported her plea to remain in Canada through an online petition addressed to Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

Gil-Canadian couple Oswald and Ma. Ia Magno started the campaign online in 2008.

No ordinary caregiver

"Bayan was not just a caregiver," Tejada's lawyer Rafael Fabregas told the Inquirer shortly after the died. "She was also the champion of a worthy cause, the Avian Tejada Law.

"Her other caregiver had gone as far as she had in lobbying the Canadian government to overhaul the caregiver program. The Parliamentary Committee on Citizenship and Immigration is currently reviewing proposals to reform the program, which includes the Avian Tejada Law."

If passed, Fabregas said, the measure would require live-in caregivers from having to pass a second medical examination before being granted permanent residence in Canada.

REQUIEST Joanna Tejada inspired Canadian legislation to benefit caregivers.

Tejada arrived in Canada on a cold winter day in March 2003. She had a difficult start. She came from Hong Kong where she had worked as a nanny for several years and where there was a SARS outbreak at that time.

EARLY... Inventor Avner Ben-Gurion—is a disease where the first symptoms can develop into a lethal pneumonia.

Fabregas said that upon her arrival in Canada, Tejada could treat a mouthlung self-imposed quarantine before getting a job.

Tejada's stage 4 cancer of the colon was diagnosed during her immigration examination in 2006. If not for her illness, she would have been assured of permanent residency which, accordingly to petitioners on her behalf, she deserved.

She had served well

Owing to her illness, she was to have been deported on Aug. 6 last year.

"During the three years when she was able, Tejada, in her small way, supported the Canadian economy that she now desperately needs to save her life," the petitioners said then.

"She is no burden to the healthcare system. She is being looked after by generous and compassionate doctors who are providing their services for free."

Through caregivers like Tejada, they argued, Canadians were able to lead productive lives. During armed unfl, she had more reasons to seek humanitarian protection than refugees that Canada had been known to accept, they said.

Permanent residence

The Tejada case arose around the time the movie "Caregiver," starring Sharon Cuneta, became a box-office hit.

In July last year, Tejada was granted permanent residency status by the Canadian and Immigration Canada (IRC). The decision, Fabregas said then, could lead to the removal of the requirement for caregivers to have a second medical examination to obtain permanent residency status.

The requirement is considered "onerous" in the applies only to caregivers.

Canada's caregiver program grants permanent resident status to foreign domestic workers after completing three years of work and getting medical and criminal record clearances. According to an article by Nicholas Keung in The Toronto Star, 8,355 live-in caregivers became permanent residents through the program.

Caregivers must undergo mandatory medical examinations. The first is for a work visa, and the second is for applying for immigrant status. Last year, 8,156 live-in caregivers became permanent residents through the program, Keung reported.

Hero's welcome

Tejada was rushed to the Toronto General Hospital on March 2. She died two days later. She is survived by her husband and sister Bernardita, as well as friends and supporters, seen beside her.

"Tejada's remains will be flown back to the Philippines," Fabregas said. "She deserves a hero's welcome as her illness paved the way for others to be treated with fairness, dignity and respect."

A period of repose will be observed when Tejada would be coming home.

Pinay among widows facing US expulsion

SAN ANTONIO—FILIPINO NURSE Gerodolfo Hanfel is facing deportation.

Hanfel's husband died of a heart attack in 1999, before the government approved her green card application. She was notified in 2002 that although the couple had a child together, her application was denied.

"Your former fiancé, later your husband, his child," the government informed her. "Consequently, your application ... cannot be approved as you are no longer the spouse of a citizen of the United States."

Hanfel and at least 200 immigrants nationwide face deportation under what's become known as the "widow's penalty," a federal policy ordering widows and widowers out of the country should their U.S. citizen spouse die before their immigration applications have been approved.

Immigration officials maintained they were simply enforcing the law but some advocates for the immigrants and it's a set of injustice to spouses who were following U.S. immigration laws and suffered the loss of a husband or wife, the San Antonio Express-News reported Monday.

"Our great nation ceases to seem so invite foreign fiancées, authorize them to become married to American citizens, sanction their application for legal residence, allow them to establish families and a home life together, then throw the spouses out when the American dies during bureaucratic immigration processing," said Seattle lawyer Brent Renison in a federal court filing on behalf of Hanfel.

Renison has filed lawsuits on behalf of several immigrants affected by the policy, and says Hanfel's fiancé, Senior Airman Juan Napoliano has ordered her staff to look into the issue and offer potential solutions.

Even some backers of efforts to crack down on illegal immigration agreed that the issue should be examined further. AP

Cyber corridor seen to offer 90,000 jobs

By TJ Burgonio

CLARK FREEPORT—WITH THE PHILIPPines becoming a favorite base for offshore services, as many as 90,000 jobs in the business process outsourcing (BPO) and information technology (IT) industry will be created this year, officials said yesterday.

"We're projecting this year's growth at anywhere between 20 and 25 percent, which would translate to approximately 80,000 to 90,000 jobs," said Secretary Ray Anthony Roman Olson III of the Commission on Information and Communications Technology.

Olson said CICT based its projections on the growing "global trend toward outsourcing."

"In addition to that, the Philippines has made a name for itself in the premier destination for voice services. Now we are marketing for non-voice services," he told reporters in a briefing at Cyber City Tribeca in an Clark.

In 2008, 72,000 jobs were generated in the BPO/IT industry, according to CICT.

Olson said the jobs would be distributed throughout the 12 major urban areas, including Metro Manila and Metro Cebu, that make up the so-called cyber corridor.

"It will be across the board," he said.

Earlier yesterday, in a PowerPoint presentation at a Cabinet meeting, Olson identified the 12 "seed urban cities" for outsourcing outside Metro Manila and Metro Cebu.

These were Metro Laguna, Metro Davao, Iloilo City, Metro City, Bacolod City, Pampanga, Bohol or Central, Cagayan de Oro, Batangas/Tourism and Lipa City.

"What we're trying to do is spread the economic benefits of the industry all around the country. We don't want them to be concentrated in Metro Manila," he said.

But an unimpressed President Macapagal-Arroyo cut in during the presentation and reminded Olson to identify the areas that would serve "as the concentration" of the cyber corridor.

"When you say seed areas, what's the original areas?" she said, pointing out, for instance, that the government was developing Central Philippines for tourism and northern Luzon for agribusiness, among others.

"Where is the concentration? You have to cut it off somewhere," she told Olson.

She then added: "Those 10 cities plus Metro Manila and Cebu is the cyber corridor. Otherwise the whole Philippines will be the cyber corridor. The whole Philippines will be the cyber highway..."

Palafox apologizes to Gordon, 4 others

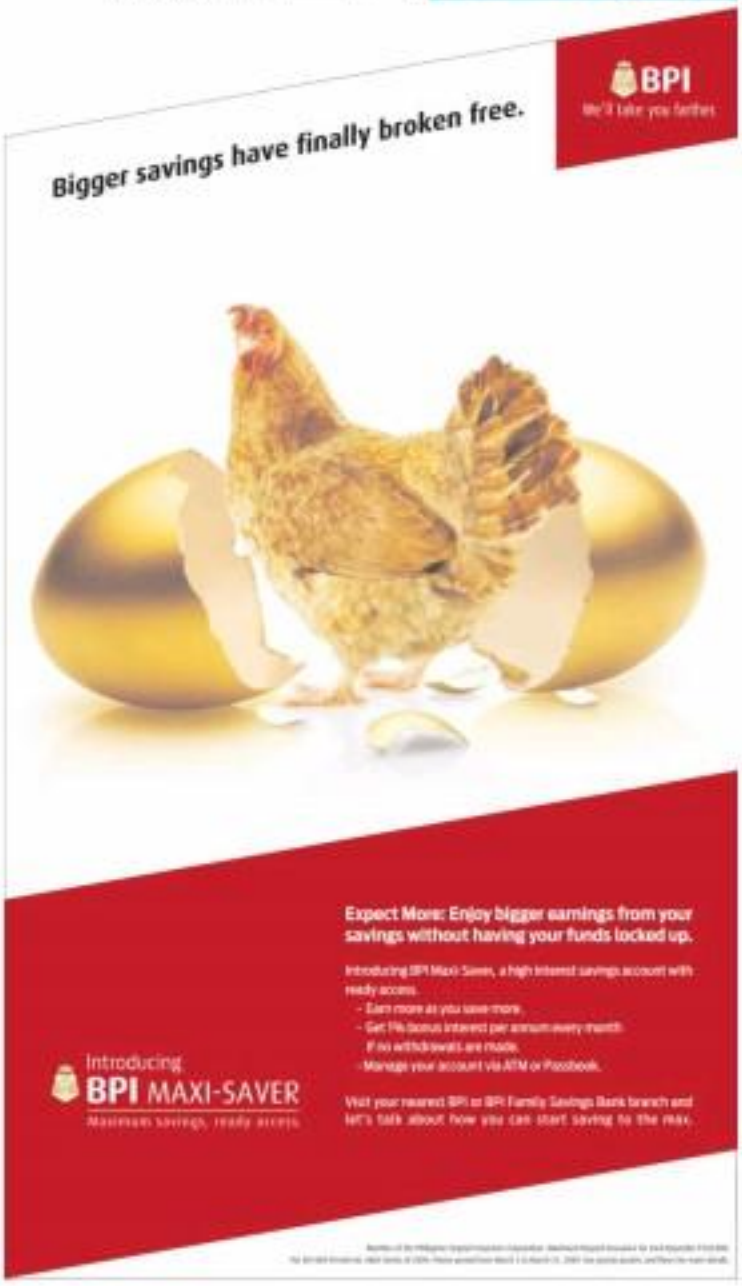
SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—RESPONDED ARchitect and urban planner Felino Palafox Jr. has apologized for implicating five public officials in alleged anomalies in the Subic Bay Freeport, according to Subic authorities.

"It can be hearsay, or maybe factual. I'm very sorry if it created a lot of trouble," Palafox was quoted by Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) press statement, quoting transcripts on last week's hearing at the House of Representatives.

Palafox issued the apology during the resumption of the hearing conducted by the House committee on banks committee, after **failing to substantiate allegations** of corruption against Sen. Richard Gordon, Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. Chairman Efraim Genuino, former congressman Prospero Pichay, Bubut partylist representative Carmen Cuenillera, and SBMA Director Reynaldo Gonzalvo.

The House committee, chaired by Isabela Rep. Edwin Uy, is investigating various claims by Palafox in the controversial Ocean 6 hotel-casino project. These include allegations of illegal land-leasing at the site and an extortion attempt related to bribing for the revision of the SBMA Master Development Plan.

Palafox said earlier that the five names he mentioned were being commonly mentioned by "hundreds if people" as protectors of SBMA Administrator Armand Arreza.



Where in the world is Valerio?

Transcript A1

The murder of Aquino on his return from three years of self-exile in the United States to rally the opposition against Marcos sparked the 1986 People Power Revolution that ousted the dictator and installed his widow Corazon as president.

Because the assassination has never been established, and the convicted soldiers continued to allege a military conspiracy, the case of the murder—that Galman, not the military escorts, killed Aquino before he himself was gunned down—the Aquino family maintains that justice has not been served and there could be no closure to the case.

Reopening of case

Narrating Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said he would order a new investigation if "facts could be located and brought back to the Philippines."

Gonzalez said he had received information that Valerio was roaming back and forth from Seattle, Washington, to nearby Vancouver, Canada, almost two to three years ago.

"We do not know for sure if he's still alive ... those are reports that he has changed his name," he said.

Asked if the enumerated men will in the country, he replied: "I think so ... based on the facts I have gathered before and all the circumstantial evidence that I have."

Gonzalez, who as Senate-bound prosecutor of the Aquino-Galman case from 1986 to 1988, added: "I don't want to discuss that, that's water under the bridge."

Valerio was commanding officer of the 19-man special operations squadron of the elite Philippine Security Command tasked to secure Aquino on his return.

The officer was to bring Aquino from the airport to a safe house in Parañaque where he had stayed during most of the eight years he had been detained by Marcos before he was allowed to undergo a heart bypass operation in the United States in 1980.

'Bizarre behavior'

But Aquino's arrival, Valerio drew up a plan code-named "Mabay" with two-thirds to fifty Aquinos are closely followed by the commanding general and scattered persons who may harm the former senator whom Marcos had incarcerated upon the declaration of martial law in 1972.

The Agrava commission commissioned in its report that on the day of the killing, Valerio had "bizarre behavior, to say the least."

The panel pointed out that instead of fetching Aquino, Valerio ordered his men to stay put inside the van parked beside Aquino's plane.

Valerio had testified it was "to avoid being grabbed (from) there and thus immobilized," which was

Jiazen to 1980.

dismissed by the commission as "specious."

The commission also found that Valerio "did not go down the van to meet Aquino, even after he saw him descending the airbridge stairway." He also "did not go down to see what had happened after the shooting."

Driver's account

AFOM Ruben Castelobuan, the driver of the military van that carried the senator's blood-soaked body from the tarmac to the hospital, was also perplexed with Valerio's conduct.

In an interview in 2007, he said that Valerio instructed him to drive to the Philippine Army's Military Security Unit where the group waited for about 20 minutes for the signal to enter the compound. Denied entry to the MSU, Valerio then ordered him to drive to the Army hospital.

"Why did Valerio not order me to drive to the hospital in Villamor, which was nearer the terminal? Why did we have to go to the MSU? But I was just a driver, so I just drove," Castelobuan said.

Gen. Nos. 11, 2008, Chief Public Attorney Persida Rueda-Acosta said a warrant of arrest was issued by the Sandiganbayan for Valerio. She said the Department of Justice had also approved two cases for the government to have Valerio extradited from the United States.

According to her, Valerio had said she allies "Felipe Yalo" while working in a commercial palm in Seattle, Washington. —Lawrence de Guzman, Inquirer Research

IN THE KNOW: One of principal accused

FORMER AIR FORCE CAPT. Felipe Valerio Jr. was among the principal accused in the double murder of Benigno Aquino Jr. and Rolando Galman, but remained at large along with the late Fabian Ver and former Marcos propagandist Chief Gregorio Cendaña.

As such, when the Sandiganbayan cashiered them in decision on Sept. 26, 1990, Valerio was only one who remained not acquitted because the court had no jurisdiction over him.

The former commanding officer of the Aquino's special operations squadron, Valerio was the leader of Task Force Alpha, the 18-man unit tasked to secure Benigno Aquino Jr. upon his arrival from exile in the United States on Aug. 21, 1983.

The unit was supposed to bring him from the then Manila International Airport to a safe house in Parañaque.

For Aquino's arrival, Valerio drew up the "BATALAN "Mabay" and indicated that his team only had two duties: To keep Aquino at the end by the Commanding General, and to arrest persons who may harm him.

Despite what was supposedly a carefully crafted plan, Aquino was assassinated upon his arrival.

The Aquino fact-finding board that investigated the Aquino assassination remembered in its report that on the day of the killing, Valerio had "bizarre behavior, to say the least."

The board pointed out that instead of fetching Aquino upon his arrival, he ordered his men to stay inside the van parked beside Aquino's plane. Valerio said it was "to avoid being grabbed detained, thus, immobilized to other teams," which the commission found "specious" to be a "specious excuse."

The board also found that Valerio "did not go down the van to meet Aquino, even after he saw him descending the airbridge stairway." He also "did not go down to see what had happened after the shooting."

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Shooting with the 'master photographer'

Transcript A1

I was incoming president of the Camera Club of the Philippines (CCP) as that time. Francis gladly accepted my invitation to attend my inclination during the annual awards night.

The master photographers of the year and winning entries were honored. Francis is informed that he was awed by the winning photos and the skills of the photographers.

"I might not be accepted here, Leo; I'm not yet that good in photography," Francis quipped in Filipino.

I told him it was typical for an applicant to feel that way and assured him that the club was not just about photographs but also about bonding and sharing of talent. I assured him that he will be a better photographer and learn along the way. Francis agreed to apply.

By invitation only

Membership in the 80-year-old CCP was by invitation and one has to be a "member" for almost a year to get accepted.

During the one-year probationary period, the probationer would be doing odd and administrative chores for members and the club. Most probationers kept less of exams to life or business, undergoes this process.

Francis gamely did his obligation and while some regular members felt awkward to approach him for chores, some were plainly star-struck, they got his photos taken with him for souvenirs.

With his high contact scores and active participation in the club's activities, Francis had the shortest probationary period and was awarded the club's 2007 Perfect Member of the Year.

First photo assignment

Francis' first photo contest was an out of town on the open competition at Wawa dam. He was handed with seasoned and master photographers and he never thought he would win. MN intimidated by the veterans, he ended up shooting the scenery for as he shot members in action instead of entries.

In his second on the open contest at the Pinagbenga fiesta fest, I rode with him to Baguio and was engaged in scenes of Tam-awan and Cariño. He was in his element shooting real life and scenery along the highway.

There was a problem though with popular personalities like Francis. When his subjects start recognizing him, their photo expressions change and their natural would also. Most people would ask for autographs and souvenir photos with their self pictures. Time would quickly end Francis' shooting spree.

In Baguio, he dreamed a boxcar on removed his face to enable him to truly show without arousing attention, only to give up using it at high noon.

The 'sapin-sapin'

One of the earliest photos shot by Francis for the club contest was a photograph he titled "Sapin-sapin." It was a close shot leading to abstraction of different layers, colors and textures of land in Mantalibay.

He asked for my opinion about it. I told him that I found it unique and different from the usual photos submitted by members. He was elated. I was baffling. His photo was published but he liked it very much.

I told him it was a "first-of-all—either you love it or hate it. He decided to submit the "Sapin-sapin" photo as his entry.

At that point, I knew that Francis' photographic potential was beyond what I can offer. I knew he'll begin attached to them. The "Sapin-sapin" scored well with the judges, and that was enough for Francis to be required to shoot out only for the judges but for himself.

The collector

Francis' love for photography goes beyond the hobby of shooting. It is something that every photographer at the club experiences. Every now and then, Francis would call or text me about his latest lens purchases, his MAC and, yes, his cameras.

I remembered that during the Baguio contest time, Francis pulled me from a dinner and walked me to a small camera store in Session just to show me his next purchase. Aside from the lens digital Canon, Francis went he old film camera in—Leica, Nikonmats, Minoltas.

He even traded his old Canon 40D body for one of my old **SmartMedia**. It was not a fair trade for me but I knew that he certainly would be happier using his first SmartMedia.

Just like most of us at the club, he might have more than a dozen cameras in the dry box—from film to digital, from compact to SLRs to view cameras. Just lately he bought a 4x5 large format which he hand-carried from Las Vegas. He was not able to use it.

His art

Francis' works are varied, experimental but expressive and alive. His content varies naturally carry a story. He never "kills" his shots. He could bear he took his shots for the events and members around his pictures.

Whenever he commits me on his entries, I normally choose the one he is most euphoric about it. Your artists like him are conscious of more than what is seen. His photographs excite left.

OTS king

Francis' force is on the open (OTS) contests where entries are confined for (open) and entries from a limited area, shot at a limited time, normally in a day to 2008, Francis almost bagged the 2008 OTS Photographer of the Year award.

He missed an opportunity to augment his scores when he was not able to join a contest in Mariveles due to his responsibilities. Francis ended up third, earning with it a Leica-inspired trophy which he proudly displayed around and blogged about.

Passion to win

Francis never failed to join the club's monthly contest even during his hospitalization. The club has monthly photo themes and entries are judged every first Monday of the month.

Despite his busy shoot his and work schedule, Francis made it update to shoot for the theme and to very seldom dog, lose his digital file or "budget" of photos.

His ultimate, however, did not deter him from shooting from his room. In fact, a theme last year was "Serenade" and this would normally require location shoots of day or night sessions.

Francis instead opted to enjoy shooting a woman's red luminous lips. That was the lips of Pia Ortiz while I shot her shoot from his hospital bed! It seized very well against the nudes in the judging table. Francis' passion for his art and his craft is only admirable.

Last shot

Francis' last contest submission was the one of his KG contestant. Our theme for the month of March 2009 was a different one—"Black on Black" in white paper. The contest he was challenged by the hospital after his chemotherapy was needed up, Francis immediately planned for a shoot with his mom Black at the Antonio gym.

Two days later, he became one needs to attend the club's meeting to present his entry personally his entries. He stayed well with his entries for the coveted Master Photographer Cup of the Club, the highest honor given to the best of the photographers of the 1,100 members club.

Had Francis survived his battle with leukemia, he is certain to be a serious and top contender to be master photographer. He may not be able to do on new but I am certain that Francis continues to shoot and continues his passion for photography.

Some of his stunning landscapes in heaven with the angels and saints as his subjects for portraits. And beside Francis, as his photo buddy, is the true Master of the Universe.

(The author is the past president of the Camera Club of the Philippines and the best photographer of his doctoral employers, he is currently the president of Informatics Philippines.)

Russian sees end of American Dream

Transcript A1

world's four superpowers would start breaking up into six different territories by the yearend.

Panarin, a former KGB analyst who heads the Diplomacy Academy of the Russian Foreign Ministry, likened the current crisis in the United States to the last days of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), and said US President Barack Obama would be unable to stop his country's economic meltdown and eventual disintegration.

"I've applied the theory of the United States and my conclusion is that it has no future ... The fall of Wall Street last year could be likened to the end of the American Dream," Panarin said in a lecture.

"Obama will not be able to do anything. He is like [the USSR's last leader Mikhail] Gorbachev, who had beautiful words to use but when it came to work, it was a different matter. Obama is the American version of Gorbachev," he said.

Panarin, whose relief to implement reforms to save the Soviet communist system, but failed. He eventually presided over the USSR's relatively peaceful demise.

6 'republics'

Panarin, who predicted as early as 1998 that the United States would eventually collapse, said its disintegration would begin this summer and last for nine months before six separate "republics" emerge in its place.

He said these new territories would include the "California Republic" (comprising the states of California, Washington, Oregon, Nevada, Arizona, Utah, and Idaho), which would be absorbed on full under the influence of China, and the "Texas Republic" (Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and Florida) that would become part of or fall under Mexico's influence.

Panarin said Canada would get or influence the "Central North American Republic" (the Midwest plus Montana, Wyoming and Colorado), "Islamic America" (the northeastern American seaboard plus Illinois, Michigan, North and South Carolina) would end up with the European Union or the United Kingdom.

He said Alaska would revert back to Russia, and Japan and China would take over Hawaii.

Pyramid of debt

Panarin, who holds a doctorate in political science, said America's collapse was being brought about by economic and political factors, particularly the fall of the US dollar and its becoming foreign debt.

"They have invested in the United States a pyramid [of foreign debt] based on the dollar, and they see no other way to solve this crisis," he said, adding:

"In the 1990s, the US almost had no foreign debt, but in seven years, it reached $2 trillion. Now, this leads to debt of $12 trillion and as it grew six times in just a decade.

"This sentence one of the situation in my country before the USSR fell because our foreign debt increased five times."

Panarin said the US government's debt is a time bill that someone will pay in the future. There will be changes in its economic map. There will be a change in its nomination that would lead to its new [territories]," he said.

Other signs of collapse

Panarin noted that the number of US banks declaring bankruptcy had risen from just three in 2007 to 23 in 2008.

"In the first month of 2009, 12 US banks were ready, and so we can see the trend among US banks," he said.

He added that the other signs of a collapsing America was its shrinking gross domestic product (GDP), having begun to fall by more than $1 trillion, and the biggest unemployment figures "in the last 60 years."

Panarin also said that through their legislatures, eight US states had reinvented their sovereignty since the US federal government, since the 1787 Philadelphia Convention, which established the US federal government, and that 10 more states would reconsider after its election.

"The fall of the US will create many problems around the world. There will be chaos and conflict. We should answer what we should do and the US will disintegrate," Panarin said.

Propaganda

But while Panarin's claims appeared thought-provoking and timely, his audience was not entirely convinced.

Political science professor Randy David, who aired his views after Panarin's speech, questioned the "theoretical soundness" of the latter's claims.

Others said Panarin's views might just be part of Russia's diplomatic campaign to weaken the United States, its traditional rival.

"If Dr. Panarin is not a long-dead expert or an astrologer but a scientist, and we expect his analysis to be based on an argument. Theory is their observation about empirical events, not just to the US but also in the world-wide economy," David said.

"While we have pile after pile of grievances against the US and many of us here in the University of the Philippines are hoping that it would finally fail, we should also learn to appreciate our superiorities from a rational point of view. We cannot be progressive on, what might happen," he said, alluding to the premier state university's organization in the past as a hotbed of student radicalism.

Unlike the ruble

While conceding that a seemingly invincible superpower could collapse, as shown by the USSR, David particularly questioned Panarin's claims about the strength of the US dollar.

"The American dollar is unlike the Soviet ruble. The Soviet ruble is based on no global economy. The American dollar, whether we like it or not, has become a global economy," David said.

"China and Japan's foreign reserves are all in dollars. In broad daily economics like these can't do anything but plan to support the country that is the root of the financial crisis," he said.

David also questioned Panarin's claim that the six purported "republics" would fall under the influence of or be gobbled up by other countries.

"Why I could imagine California's dynamic economy, why would they allow themselves to be absorbed by China? Why would Californians think that their state would be ruled by China?" David said.

"These other countries also have their own national orientation. Japan is not going to lose its cultural crisis, and I think no one can say that the economic situation in Mexico is better than in the US," David said.

"And it would be harder to imagine that the US nation statehood would be taken by the United Kingdom, where the lands in England are even more ill than those in America," he said.

Defense chief throws hat into 2010 ring

DEFENSE SECRETARY GILBERTO TEODORO, who belongs to one of the country's most powerful political clans, yesterday said he wants to become the next President, following in the footsteps of two of his predecessors.

But before throwing his hat into the ring, Teodoro wants to secure the endorsement of President Macapagal-Arroyo and the ruling Lakas-CMD coalition.

"The President's endorsement is very important, being my direct boss," said Teodoro, a nephew of former President Gregorio Aquino and of businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, chair of San Miguel Corp.

"That's the best way to go," Teodoro, a physiognomic 44-year-old, told Inquirer in an interview in his office at the Camp Aguinaldo military headquarters.

"I have to really wait for the political process that will decide who will be the ruling party's standard bearer in the next presidential election," he said.

It was the first time Teodoro has indicated he could also be a candidate.

He is also the first candidate to openly court the support of the President. Almost all others are keeping a safe distance from Mrs Arroyo because of allegations of corruption in her regime and her dismal showings in popularity polls.

"If I was independently midwife the candidacy and without the consciousness, that's a 'La Mancha' type of scenario," Teodoro said, referring to the novel titled Don Quixote, whose dreamy hero was out of touch with reality.

He said he was confident he would be endorsed by the President and her party.

"They would not have not given me the job of secretary of national defense in the first place if they had not trusted me," he said.

Teodoro's wife, Bibik, who used to be a commercial model, nominated and won his congressional seat when the President appointed him as defense secretary in 2007.

The former lawyer and three-term congressman aims to duplicate the political careers of two former Presidents—Ramon Magsaysay and Fidel Ramos—who rose to the top after successes in the defense department.

For the election, he is also counting on the backing of his uncle Eduardo Cojuangco, who heads arch-rival San Miguel and is one of the country's wealthiest men.

But Teodoro says he is "no loner" from his uncle's party, the Nacionalista People's Coalition. "The group is allied with Mr Arroyo, but some party members are among the President's staunch critics, including popular Senators Loren Legarda and Francis Escudero, both of whom have also said they will run for President."

Reuters

FrancisM cremated

By Phoebe R. Cruz
Entertainment

FILIPINO RAP ICON FRANCIS MAGALONA, who died on March 6 (Friday) at the age of 44, was to be cremated at 1 a.m. today at the Funeraria Paz crematorium on Amoranto Avenue, Quezon City.

His ashes were to be brought back to Christ the King memorial chapel in Greenmeadows, Quezon City, where a Mass was scheduled at 9 a.m. today.

His ashes would be placed at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina City.

Last night, a non-liturgical Mass was held at 9 p.m. at Christ the King in Greenmeadows.

Songs were performed by popular singers Regine Velasquez, Ogie Alcasid, Gary Valenciano (whose cohost in "Eat...Bulaga!"), who sang "Running Circles," and Gary Valenciano who sang "Goodbye, My Friend" at the end of the Mass.

Eulogies

Eulogies were delivered by his wife Pia Arroyo-Magalona and their children Lizna, Nick, Maxine, Frank Jr., Isaih, Elmo, Arki and Clara; his sisters; his friends Luis Morgan and Vinny Imbado from the Camera Club of the Philippines where Magalona was a member; his best friend Michael V. and executive Malou Choa-Fagar of Television and Production Exponents Inc.

Magalona, who adopted the stage name FrancisM and dubbed the "Master Rapper" and "Man From Manila," was considered a pioneering artist who successfully put rap music into the mainstream consciousness—with his hit single "Mga Kababayan."

Starting out as a dancer on TV, Magalona moved onto acting in films but pursued a burning passion for music by writing and recording songs which wound up in his debut album "Ely."

Released in 1990, it contained nonstop love songs, seasoned dance tracks and "Mga Kababayan"—whose driving beats and heartfelt lyrics about racial pride, love of country and homegrown values captivated the masses at the times.

Two years later, Magalona released a follow-up album, "Yugto ng Pagsibol," which consisted of songs about his personal experience with drug use ("Mga Pusang") and cynical views on political exercises ("Unang Hirit").

Barin: I am not resigning

By Dorie C. Dueñas

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE Commission Chair Fe Barin is not resigning despite reports in the Senate that she and four SEC commissioners step down amid accusations that the corporate regulator had protected the Legacy Group's pyramid firms.

"I have not changed my mind. I am not resigning," said Barin, who took over the helm of the SEC on Sept. 1, 2004.

Barin said she met with all SEC commissioners yesterday to accomplish two things: Request Commissioner Jesus Martinez to go on leave of absence and ask the commissioner to present his side, particularly his written...

Martinez was a no-show at the SEC yesterday.

Barin said Martinez's seven-year term was ending this week but under the law, he could stay until it is successor was named.

But in this case, Barin said Martinez's resignation would be unconditional and irrevocable, a document that handles the process of industry.

Legacy officials alleged Martinez offered to help the group when it came up against regulatory problems with the SEC.

Sense of disgust

Barin said the Senate would file a resolution "expressing the sense of disgust for the actions of this predatory pyramid corporation and the responses and inactions of the SEC as the designated regulatory body to protect the interests of the general public from these predatory companies."

"I am asking the resignation of the entire SEC because it's a collegial body ... They must share the responsibility for the fiasco that has happened," Enrile said.

He asked the Department of Justice (DOJ) to immediately file bribery and corruption charges against Martinez.

Hold-departure list

Following Malacañang's order, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said he would direct the Bureau of Immigration to place Martinez on its hold-departure list while he was being investigated both by the DOJ and by the PAGC.

He is scheduled to attend the start of the full Cabinet meeting in Clark Freeport, Anthony Golez, deputy presidential spokesperson, said Ms Arroyo was concerned because there was "apparently a blatant violation of the law and there has to be discipline within the ranks of the SEC if these things are indeed happening."

In the Senate hearing on Monday, Carolina Hilado, chief executive officer of the collapsed Legacy Consolidated Plans Inc. (LCPI), said the firm had bought for P6 million a house in Forbes Town Subdivision in Bonifacio, which Martinez later gave to his son.

Upon the instructions of Legacy Group founder Celso de los Angeles in 2006, Hilado claimed that she also gave Martinez P1.478 million as payment for a third lot in Forbes Town owned by Legacy's Royal Bank of Sun Inn.

Martinez has denied receiving money from De los Angeles, but admitted his son sold a car to the Legacy Group founder.

Witnesses credible

Gonzalez said he found the witnesses against Martinez "very credible."

He said he met them over the weekend when Parents Ita, aiding Parents (PIP) Coalition convener Philip Piette brought them to the Gonzalez residence.

The justice secretary told reporters the President "was angry" when she gave orders that the DOJ investigate Martinez's culpability in allegedly protecting Legacy in his capacity as SEC commissioner.

"In a way he is a turncoat (kalaglag) case who takes advantage of something he or she is supposed to safeguard(),"Gonzalez said.

He said the investigation of Martinez might result in corruption and graft charges having illicit against the SEC commissioner. "He is one of the instruments ... that De los Angeles was able to get away," he added.

NBI team

The justice secretary ordered National Bureau of Investigation Director Nestor Mantaring to form a team that will look into Martinez's involvement in the Legacy Group scandal.

He also formed another panel of prosecutors to conduct preliminary investigation in the case that will be filed against Martinez.

The new panel is separate from the DOJ task force on the Legacy controversy already undertaking preliminary investigation proceedings.

Deputy State Prosecutor Aileen Marie Gutierrez chairs the panel investigating Martinez, with Prosecutors Ramon Galvez and Ramcordero Mendoza as members.

Gonzalez said the DOJ committee he formed would also look into the possible involvement in similar shenanigans by other officials from the SEC and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

Covert PAGC probe

Dr. Guzman said the PAGC had initiated a covert investigation into the possible involvement of SEC officials in the Legacy controversy about two weeks ago.

But she admitted that the agency got a headache enough only after Hilado spilled the beans on Martinez.

Dr. Guzman said that while the PAGC was mandated only to look into the administrative liability of officials, it would also recommend the filing of criminal charges against Martinez if its probe "establishes substantial evidence" against him.

"If anyone now that there may have been processes set aside, not just the betrayal of public trust," she said.

Criminal aspect

"We will also look into the criminal aspect, on whether special privileges were given and if there was bribery."

Provincial Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco, dean of the DOJ panel investigating the Legacy Group, said the prosecutors were looking into the complaints against De los Angeles and the concerned companies couldn't bare their charges on the Senate proceedings.

Velasco said preliminary investigations were being conducted across the country. The preliminary investigations at the DOJ offices in Manila has been scheduled on March 20, PDI reports from Rosario Garcia, Inquirer Central Luzon

Cibac disowns SEC commissioner

By Gil Cabacungan

MONEY TO GO SEC - He's officially retired by tomorrow but President Arroyo wants Commissioner Jesus Enrique Martinez to go on leave and the justice department to probe the bribery allegations against him.

THE ANTICORRUPTION Group of Jesus & Lord UEU founder Eddie Villanueva yesterday disowned Commissioner Jesus Martinez of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) who is accused of gaining a house and lot and cash from Legacy Group founder Celso delos Angeles.

Party-list Rep. Joel Villanueva of the Citizens' Battle Against Corruption (Cibac) said Martinez had not been an active member of the group since the election in 2001 when the latter was in third nominee. (Cibac got votes enough for only two seats in the House of Representatives).

"I [commissioner Martinez is not even a member of JIL. He was part of Cibac in the 2001 elections but since then we never heard anything from him," said Villanueva, a son of the JIL founder.

Appalled

He said he was disappointed at said Martinez. "Cibac is a staunch anti-corruption advocate and I am appalled by the revelations in the Senate hearing [on Monday]," Villanueva said.

Martinez was reportedly endorsed to the SEC post by the JIL founder in March 2001.

Villanueva said that Cibac would support efforts to get to the bottom of the charges not only against Martinez but also against Pandacan Rep. Ed Santos Chiches.

An official of a legacy pension firm testified in the Senate Monday that a total of P1.6 million was given to Chiches.

The lawmaker claimed the money was Legacy's donation for his public service programs in his district.

"This is a trial about corruption and alleged corrupt public officials, and hopefully in this administration, no one is above the law," Villanueva said.

He said he would support moves to investigate Chiches, a member remain of Martinez, in the House ethics committee so as allow him to answer charges that he received nomination less than five days before Angeles.

Bukidnon Rep. Teofisto Guingona III said the Ombudsman should immediately prosecute Martinez and De los Angeles.

"Do it now, do it fast and most importantly, do it to a consequent manner," Guingona reserved.

SEC executive told: Take leave of absence

Front page 1 »

Senate orders case against Martinez before he retires

If Martinez resigns, Martinez would have all his retirement benefits forfeited and would be perpetually disqualified from holding any other government post, PAGC Chair Constancio de Guzman said.

Martinez is the SEC's overnight commissioner of the non-traditional securities department that handles the pyramid industry.

Legacy officials alleged Martinez offered to help the group when it came up against regulatory problems with the SEC.

Sense of disgust

Enrile said the Senate would file a resolution "expressing the sense of disgust for the actions of this predatory pyramid corporation and the responses and inactions of the SEC as the designated regulatory body to protect the interests of the general public from these predatory companies."

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Legacy's Ford Expedition abandoned at PDIC parking lot

Front page 1 »

Legacy Group founder Celso de los Angeles reportedly bought from the son of Commissioner Jesus Martinez of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Carolina Hilado, chief executive officer of the defunct Legacy Consolidated Plans Inc. (LCPI), claimed at a Senate hearing on Monday that the sale of the Ford Expedition could prove the close association between Martinez and De los Angeles.

Hilado said that she handed P1.4 million in cash to Martinez on Nov. 9, 2006 as payment for a vehicle that De los Angeles bought from him.

She said the money the gave to Martinez came from Legacy's Royal Bank of Sun Inn.

It's a gift

But Martinez said at the hearing that it was his son and namesake, Jesus JR, who sold the vehicle to De los Angeles.

Jun, like Hilado yesterday said that the transaction was a share because De los Angeles supposedly bought the vehicle but did not get it. "It's a gift," Martinez said of the SUV.

Martinez was accused of receiving a house and lot and P1.46 million from De los Angeles apparently to turn a blind eye to the latter's illegal practices in running his companies, including pyramid firms.

The delivery of the Ford Expedition is the cloud of tire-tight indication that Martinez was "lying claiming," Rowas said.

He said when the vehicle was returned, it was almost abandoned and its key drawers in the ground.

He said he was informed that the seat rides down the vehicle in the parking lot of the PDIC main office was employed as the security agency of Martinez's son.

This only showed that the SUV had been "under the control and possession of Martinez for the past two years," the senator said.

The driver of the SUV, Ronald Constantin, 29, was brought to the Makati Police Community Precinct 4 after PDIC watchmen escorted him and station clerk officer Mary Jane Yadao.

No owner's documents

Yadao said watchman Jeff Lumapas called up the station at around 1 a.m. and reported that Constantin had tried to remove the vehicle in the PDIC parking lot on Chino Roces Avenue "for no apparent reason."

"The driver told the security guards that he was only ordered by the owner of the vehicle to test [drive it in front of the PDIC," Yadao told the lawmen.

When asked by police officers, Yadao said the driver declined to name the owners of the SUV.

He said two policemen, Intel Guevara and Ariel Mijares, arrested Constantin after he failed to present documents on the vehicle's ownership.

"They [policemen] thought the vehicle was stolen as the driver could not present the registration of the expedition," Yadao said.

"It's totally confidentiable for anybody to drive an expensive vehicle like a Ford Expedition without any documents and just leave it for an apparent reason," she said.

No driver's license

The driver did not even have a driver's license, according to Yadao.

She said a certain Ahmad Tan, who identified himself as a PDIC assistant vice president, arrived at the station at around 9:30 a.m. and sought possession of the SUV.

The station desk officer said she decided to release the vehicle to Tan after Nancy Sevilla-Ilano, PDIC vice president for membership and liquidation, was able to show original copies of the official receipt and certificate of registration of the Ford Expedition.

Legacy lawyer

Yadao said the police later released Constantin to the custody of Lourdes Ermanie Bejec, who identified herself as a lawyer of the Legacy Group.

The SUV was registered to Spin Management Group, a Binondoan-based trading corporation owned by Martinez's son, Jesus Gianpaolo III, according to documents.

A copy of a deed of sale showed that Martinez's son sold the vehicle for P1.475 million to Royal Bank of Sun Inn (RBSI), another Legacy Group's 13 rural banks shut down by December last year.

Inquirer Corrinne signed the deed of sale dated Dec. 12, 2007 on behalf of RBSI.

In a statement, the PDIC said the "missing" 2001 Ford Expedition was "formally turned over" to the agency.

The PDIC said Constantin was turnovered by De los Angeles and a woman Ms. Yancy to bring the vehicle to its Makati headquarters.

"The vehicle will be subject to inspection and appraisal by the PDIC. Upon the Monetary Board approval of the liquidation of RBSI, the vehicle will be disposed of together with the other assets of the bank. Proceeds will be distributed to the bank's creditors," the statement read.

The agency said it had reported to the Land Transportation Office that the vehicle was missing after it failed to take possession of the SUV despite sending documents to RBSI manager Teodoro Gungab. With a report from Christine G. Avendaño

Cops arrest motorist using Speaker's No. 4 car plate

Front page 1 »

his car for bearing Plate No. 4, a license plate issued only to the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Members of the Philippine National Police Highway Patrol Group (HPG) flagged down Luis Lorenzo Jr. after he was spotted driving a black Mazda 3 with the plate that only Speaker Prospero Nograles is currently entitled to use.

Members of Nograles' staff reported to the HPG on Feb. 28 that two private cars—a silver Toyota Vios and a black Mazda—had been sighted on the road bearing the Speaker's special plate.

In a report, the HPG said Lorenzo was arrested around 6:30 a.m. on Tuesday on the Marcelo Subdivision access road in Sucat, Parañaque City, after officers noticed that his car plate lacked a 2008 registration sticker.

The car displayed the No. 4 plate on its front and carried a registration plate, DTS-820, on the rear, the report added.

The silver Toyota Vios, the second vehicle earlier spotted with "4" on the front, reportedly had the back plate DBR-890.

P7,000 fine

Lorenzo was placed under HPG's custody in Camp Crame pending an investigation into the source of the plates. The plate was turned over to the Land Transportation Office for verification.

The motorist, reportedly an employee of PLDT, may face charges of usurpation of authority or illegal use of fictitious name, an offense that carries a fine of P7,000, said Supt. Edwin Rutcon, HPG information chief.

Rutcon explained that only the incumbent Speaker is given No. 4 plates—a press release for the lawmaker's main vehicle and a duplicate for a second car, mainly for the family. Other House members are given the special "8" plate.

Presidential literature carry-over the "1" plate or one that reads "Pangulo" (President). The latter was introduced only in 2008 under President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's Executive Order No. 466-A.

The rest of the presidential plates for ranking public officials are as follows: "2" for the Vice President, "3" for the Senate President, "5" for the Chief Justice.

'6' for Cabinet execs

Plate "6" for Cabinet secretaries, "7" for senators, "9" for associate justices of the Supreme Court, "10" for the Solicitor General and justices of the Court of Appeals; "11" for the chair of the Commission on Elections, "12" for Cabinet undersecretaries.

Plates "14" for the Armed Forces chief of staff and Philippine National Police director general, and "16" for Regional Trial Court (RTC) judges.

Mr. Intapol's (02) 920-4 complaint

Data from HPG showed that 37 vehicles were flagged down for using fake or bogus plates, 34 others for having illegally transferred plates, and 664 for using expired or unauthorized accessories or plates.

The use of special plates is a known ploy used by some motorists to evade or intimidate traffic enforcers, often to get around the ban on convoy vehicles under the number coding scheme. Reports from Jerry Esplanada and Inquirer research

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OPINION

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Peso power

JESUS MARTINEZ CLAIMS THAT BEING ONLY ONE of five commissioners at the Security and Exchange Commission, he could not have acted as protector of Jesus de las Angeles' interests. But there Martinez was head of the oversight committee with a purview over nontraditional securities—with a subordinate, OIC director Jose Aquino, specifically in charge of the promoted industry in which De las Angeles' Legaspi Holdings group was an aggressive player. Martinez, while disclaiming actual interest or participation in their preparation, admitted in turn that he preserved Aquino's memoranda to the SEC en banc.

EDITORIAL

Anyone who has worked in a corporation, or government agency knows that this excuse Martinez had a particular kind of chess—the kind that comes from knowing what is going on. And that comes from being the one who eats dinner a policy or administrative discussion—and that his fellow commissioners would have consulted every courtesy and consideration to his opinions. And naturally there never was, and never will be, a record of this informal influence and power or how it was used.

The Senate committee hearing where Martinez, other SEC commissioners, and De las Angeles were grilled, produced more of the same—the usual, administration-style carnival public relations problem-solving: hedging on De las Angeles' past, and an astounding but predictable catalog of "I never knew!" responses to every transaction, from gift-giving to loan-providing, to "donations" that may not have actually broken the law but that surely count as cases of ethical blindness that borders on recklessness.

Yet, we know the predictable administration-style response: "Where is your proof? Bring it to the proper forum!" And indeed, we can only hope and pray the allegations of wrongdoing are proven, eventually in the courts.

Still, there are enough sordid circumstances—from allegations that Martinez had been given a house and lot and a vehicle, even as his son may have been doing business with Legaspi, to Batasbayan Rep. Eduardo Zialcita accepting "donations" from Legaspi and never surrendering it even as the House investigated De las Angeles and ran inhibiting himself out of a possible conflict of interest—to warrant profound soul-searching on the part of officialdom.

Business as usual is so untidy, so fraught with potential conflicts of interest, so manifestly prone to the appearance, never mind the substance, of impropriety that this sort of business has to be made so unusual as to become extinct. Quite obviously the letter of the law can be adhered to so fastidiously as to experience a violation of the spirit of the law, or lives, since we have a battery of laws governing ethical conduct among public officials that have served to foster, not officialdom, but any pretenses that these officials actually provide public service.

There is, too, the futility of it all. Provoked to make a ritual demand for Martinez to resign, Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile was, instead, rebuffed by Martinez's pointing out that he is due to retire on March 12. Which still leaves, of course the Office of the Ombudsman. But then, we have just pointed out the futility of it all.

What we have seen is how the Palace ploy of lashing out at its critics, a tactic pursued by Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez herself, is a useful one. It has been employed relentlessly by De las Angeles who answers each and every charge by making counter-charges against the whistle-blowers who provided evidence against him. In the meantime, everyone, from the SEC, to the Ombudsman, to Congress, to Malacañang, all insist that investigations will take place, the rule of law will be upheld, and due process fulfilled.

This is Juan Power at work. A variation on the age-old dictum that he who has the gold makes the rules—or breaks them with impunity. In terms of the political, the large number of administration stalwarts whose names have cropped up in connection with the Legaspi scam, from the Speaker to Zialcita and De las Angeles himself, only serves to underscore the kind of representative democracy we have: well and truly it is a "members game." With so many of them being implicated, they have no choice but to hearten it out collectively.

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Please save those majestic trees behind UP

CALLING ALL UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES students, professors, alumni and environmentalists: Raquel Fortunato's enemy troops are set to remove the line of trees in front of the UP Integrated School in Diliman to widen Katipunan Avenue into C-5. The line of centuries-old acacia trees (before us in front of the Bulacy Filtration Plant, the offices of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) and the Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA) may also be demolished.

The irony is that the acacias' very existence has to be sacrificed. The line of acacias can be traced into an island separating the lanes of Katipunan, they provide beauty and shade to pedestrians and motorists. This connection are enabling continuous open-air dinner-huge meals in trees whose trunks are so big it would take three or four men to encircle a trunk with their spread-eagled arms. They would bring plenty of heavy vehicles and heavy equipment to carry out their evil scheme. There is now extreme hunger for wood as dinner-use indicators.

I told Environment Secretary Lito Atienza at the Kapihan in Manila about the impending disaster. He said he didn't know, he would not allow it. But he better have the trees watched 24 hours a day because the MMDA contractors may strike in the dead of night. Fernando's now-famous strike at night, like they did in front of the acacias.

Chainsaw-wielding men can now down those trees in no time at all while everybody is asleep. When people wake up the next morning, the acacias would be down, officials would claim their hands are tied by the court's TRO, but the acacias would be dead and nothing could be done for them anymore except haul the wood to the wood carvers.

Dominion Dy (the MMDA and the Joint Bay Metropolitan Authority) to plant 100 new seedlings for every mature tree cut or criminally felled. It will take those seedlings a hundred years to grow as large as the trees that will be cut. Even if they plants a million seedlings for every acacia cut down, it will take centuries for anything happens to the workers who cut the trees and the officials who ordered them to do it.

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

except run laughing all the way to their banks.

Please save those noble trees. They are God's creations, same as us. They deserve to live like we do. And they make their part of Katipunan much more beautiful, shade and useful.

* * *

Still on the environment, you will recall that part of the Marikina Watershed Reservation was set aside by President Corazon Aquino, and later expanded by President Fidel Ramos, to be the dumps for Metro Manila's garbage. Fruit-bearing orchards were bulldozed to give way to the dump now known as the San Mateo landfill.

Former Sen. Jovito Salonga, representing displaced farmers, the municipality of San Mateo and concerned citizens of Rizal, filed a case with the Supreme Court contesting the order. On Dec. 15, 2005, the Supreme Court en banc handed down its decision declaring the two presidential proclamations illegal and ordering in return to the watershed and its control to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

"This series finds in any remaining supreme decree, executive act, law or ordinance authorizing the establishment of the Rizal landfill and Quezon Metropolitan Solid Waste Disposal and Management Center," the Court said. "Laws pertaining to the protection of the environment must not clashed to a vacuum. Congress passed these laws fully aware of the precious state of land, our economic and natural wealth. It was precisely to minimize the adverse impact of humanity's actions on all aspects of the natural world, at the same time maximizing and ensuring an environmental balance which must and cannot run counter to productive and enjoyable harmony with each other, that these legal safeguards were put in place. They should thus not be on light. Any case aside in the face of what is easy and expedient."

The watershed was returned to the DENR.

Even Proclamation 821, issued by President Ramos, which excludes from the watershed 4,000 hectares of land to be used as the sanitary landfill by the MMDA, says that "when no longer needed for sanitary landfill purposes or the related waste disposal activities, the parcels of land subject of this Proclamation shall revert back to the part of the Marikina Watershed Reservation."

The landfill has been closed for seven years now, so why is the MMDA still looking at trees that part of the watershed? The DENR now has jurisdiction and suddenly now it and Batasan should assert his control over it. The owners of the orchards that were bulldozed and who have lease contracts with the DENR on the parcels of land are demanding their return as they can continue cultivating them.

The MMDA has hired a security agency to guard the area, but the guards are allowing squatters to come in. They cut trees and their relatives themselves have squatted on the land, building their houses on the land as if they own it.

Meanwhile, hordes of squatters have invaded the whole watershed, and the trees for charcoal and pulluted the Boso-boso River which feeds Wawa Dam, which will soon be harnessed by San Lorenzo Ruiz Development Corp. to add to the water supply of Metro Manila and expand its area. I have been many times about the Wawa Dam, the original source of water for Manila, and how the water impounded behind it just flows over the dam and is wasted in the Pacific ocean and Pasig River and Manila Bay, at a time when Metro Manila is suffering from water lack every summer. San Lorenzo Ruiz offered to harness Wawa Dam at no cost to the government, but the MWSS and the National Power Corporation have not yet taken the look almost 20 years to give their approval.

Talk of red tape that MMA wants to be cut.

Astonishing

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

I REMEMBER AGAIN A QUESTION SOMEONE posed to me at the 2006 meet of 10 Asia in Hawaii. Media, she said, also tended to be corrupt and abusive. Surely one could at least understand, if not condone, the killings of some journalists? Maybe the target of the undue criticism got fed up and, lacking any means of redress, took the law into his hands?

I replied that I had heard the same proposition from some people when I spoke in the provinces. The provincial media tending to be more corrupt and abusive than their town counterparts, they said, didn't some of the journalists rather get bumped off have it coming to them? There are limits to how far people may take abuse.

Astonishingly, that is the same proposition Aquilino Pimentel Jr. is hinting at today. Arguing for his right of reply bill, he says that the high incidence of media killings may be attributed in part to the failure of media, specifically radio, to allow the targets of criticism to defend themselves. Thus, "the right of reply once it becomes a law, may reduce the tendency of the trigger-happy to resort to the gun, rather than to the law, to level things up with media critics."

What to God's name has happened to him? As I told my audience in Hawaii and those in the provinces, true, Philippine media can be abusive, and radio exceptionally so, and, true, media can be corrupt, and radio exceptionally too, particularly in the provinces where lawyers abuse them abound exceptionally so, but by no means are public officials. We cannot have one single solitary misdeed done or group of people who are more corrupt and abusive than our public officials. Nothing that is committed in comparison with the scale of corruption and abuse, ruthlessness and oppression, public officials daily parade before us. Is it perfectly understandable, if not condonable, then for us to start murdering our public officials for lack of having a right of reply?

Quite frankly, I don't know that I'm inclined to answer that question with "no." In the specific case of our public officials, it would not just be perfectly understandable, it would be perfectly condonable. A good lawyer, or even a bad one, can make a case for the wholesale slaughter not being murder but self-defense. People who are oppressed body and soul, who are crushed from the depths of their being to the heights of their dreams, have every right to defend themselves.

I don't know why even now a party-list representative isn't filing a bill to empower calling the police to have a right of redress, expressed among others in Juan de la Cruz being able to deliver his own privilege speech in the Senate and House of Representatives, being able to use Channels 4, 9, 13, the Public Information Agency and various government agencies to disavow the people masquerading as his spokespersons or representatives, and being able to attend press conferences in Malacañang where he may, like the late blue journalist Maximilian de Jesus, who shamed the journalistic army to finding true tedium, hurl his shoes at the offending personages there, shouting, "Here's your goddamn privilege speech, you dog!"

I don't know why a party-list representative shouldn't like that at all or someone and not just to show up the silliness of the right of reply bill, or just-or at not being able to run to our public officials to express our concerns or intentions toward our public officials.

The point is simple. Whether public officials have a right of reply or not, they have no business muzzling journalists. Whether they have been slighted rightly or wrongly, they have no business muzzling journalists. The people of the Philippines have more business muzzling their public officials than their public officials do journalists.

I'd be the last person to argue for the purity of media, though I'd be the first to argue for its virtues too amid the impurities. I grant some journalists are corrupt and abusive, and I grant that though media generally recognize the right of the public to reply as shown by their printing or airing of the side of the aggrieved in their stories, they do not always do it in a way that appeases. That is not entirely the fault of media. Public officials, many of whom are crooks, are just appeasing.

The abuse is real, but the right of reply doesn't curb the abuse, it adds to the abuse. It is the greater abuse. Pimentel names the point when he says his bill does not impose prior censorship or restraint. It does, but not to the way he construes it. The Philippine media do not lack for courage and have repeatedly demonstrated it, and the recent EMA hoo-haw on those after Imelda Lim's foiled "unauthorized elopement." They fought back. But they do have something to lose from this bill. That is not losing the arguments to public officials, that is losing places to public officials.

The bill weakens press freedom on a fundamental way. It does so by removing control of a newspaper's pages or a radio or TV station's air time from the hands of their editors and ceding it to public officials. In our specific context particularly, that's not just irrational, that's insane. "I cannot and every public official who gets maligned in a news report or commentary may now occupy an equivalent amount of print space or air time from media. One need not even be criticized, one need only be mentioned to demand to be read or heard saying, "I protest the mention in the imputation ..." With elections round the corner, can you imagine the mayhem this will wreak on media? This will reduce the media to the 19- or advertising firm of public officials, without their having to pay a single centavo for the service.

That's not just having their cake and eating it too. That's having their cake and having it through heaven too.

Stale martial law scenario

ANALYSIS

Armando Doronila

STUDIES OF POLITICAL CHANGE IN THE Philippines since 1986 have been static, stuck in the framework of the paradigm anchored on major constitutional events, i.e., coup attempts and Edsa street risings, as catalysts of regime change.

As we approach the 2010 national elections, we have had four elections—in 1986 which led to the overthrow of Ferdinand Marcos; in 1992, when Fidel Ramos replaced Cory Aquino; in 1998, when Joseph Estrada replaced Ramos; in 2004 when Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was elected president in her own right after Estrada was ousted in Edsa 2 in 2001), in an election marred by charges of rigging of poll results in the so-called "Hello, Garci" scandal.

The dark side of this democratic resistance is that all post-Marcos governments, except that of Ramos (1992-1998), were rocked by coup attempts and were under repeated threats of people power interventions. These continuous street mobilizations, which have become the hallmarks of Philippine electoral democracy and have raised questions of whether the new governments would be ultimately mandated or installed by a new people power, a military coup or a new dictatorship.

A new study, by a U.S.-based think-tank, Global Source Partners, dated, March 9, warns of risks of another "less peaceful route" to regime change in 2010, not excluding a return to martial law, a throwback to the martial law clampdown by President Marcos in September 1972. Prem published excerpts. On March 5 Global Source report predicted that, although the 2010 presidential election would push through and is not preempted by the constitutional change project being pushed by the Arroyo administration, any candidate from a united opposition will likely win as over-whelming victory.

The report said the opposition is fragmented by its preference of a "united opposition," which is not "as likely to come about in the undisciplined multiparty system. The last time we had a united opposition, was during the two-party pre-martial law democracy, when a small third party merged with one of the two major parties.

"With much at stake for those hoping to stay in power, aggressive action up until the time when the election campaign officially gets underway in mid-February 2010 (the report said). "Clearly, this is a high-stakes strategy with attendant political risks."

The report claims at least one highly placed military official and a few former military men "were now talking of possible attempts to impose martial law" a la Marcos. These "highly placed" officers could only be those allied with the head of state and commander in chief of the Armed Forces, who is empowered to declare martial law. Any martial law declaration by a military rebel is pure power grab.

Economic risks also abound. Although Marcos declared martial law only after putting the economy and the officer corps behind his plan to declare it, he took pains to justify it as a constitutional exercise of power to save the country from communist insurgency and breakdown of law and order. Although he planned martial law with the general staff and trusted officers, Marcos never cut the civil authority was in control of the military which executed the plans.

Before the think tank staff assessed the "high risks" involved in such military adventurism, they displayed interest by failing to consider the capacity of the incumbent regime to replicate the 1972 Marcos declaration, especially in putting the military under leash. Ms Arroyo's lack of capacity was exposed by the number of mutinies and coup attempts against her, including the Oakwood mutiny in 2003 and the 2005 mutiny led by Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim in Fort Bonifacio. When the think tank report speaks of "high political risks," it must be referring to the risks being a powerful enough to replace the Marcos enemies.

The Global Source report is typical of Philippine scholarship—its post-Marcos political changes in the context of the 1986 people power revolution, its study of regime change to which change is determined by three key agents: military intervention, Edsa-type streets insurrection, or a combination of both, and Catholic Church intervention. Philippine studies have not offered new explanations to the new dynamics driving political instability, the actors behind the destabilization, or the emergence of new social coup attempts and calls for Edsa-type uprisings. Interventions have failed. Indeed, the Edsa solution has created its antithesis: the middle class for ethical government 2000. As a result there were four unsuccessful attempts in three years to mount a challenge in the political outlook of the middle class, especially on the impact of the overseas Filipino diaspora and remittances keeping the Philippine economy afloat on this outlook.

Despite studies on the middle class can lead to misinterpretation as set of very troubling questions: is there still a middle class constituency that can be mobilized for mass action in the streets? Have the members of the middle class been pauperized and forced to move to the poorer classes by economic and social policies that have worsened the inequitable distribution of wealth? Has the shift enlarged the base of the more dangerous and disgruntled poorer classes?

From this perspective, I'm afraid I find the Global Source report worthless.

Unethical maneuvers

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

WASHINGTON, D.C.—CHRISTIE FERGUSON both the Senate and the House of Representatives have new versions of the International Violence against Women Act (S.2279 and H.R.5027), a companion document is currently passed law on violence against women.

The IVAWA is, in the words of its supporters, "an important effort by the U.S. government to decrease violence against women and girls globally," mainly by increasing "U.S. diplomatic attention to decreasing violence against women and incorporate best practices into U.S foreign assistance."

In the last Congress, until USAID lobbyist Eve Anne Bonnet, a former staffer of Senator Mitch Mc-Connell, Jr. (Republican-Kentucky), blocked the bill from moving out of the Foreign Relations Committee. Among its most prominent supporters were then Senators Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton (and you know where they are now). And yet, because it wasn't passed in time, the bill is back to square one, and support and campaigning once again can have to spread up in passage.

Outside Congress, its main supporters, apart from the Family Violence Prevention Fund, are Amnesty International and Women Thrive Worldwide, a coalition of 100 groups, "dedicated to the agencies and international women's organizations that helped research and develop the piece of legislation."

"Current U.S. efforts to address violence against women are well-intentioned but lack leadership and piecemeal," says a briefing document. "There is limited funding for programs and scant assessment of their impact. There is almost no coordination within or between the agencies that administer the limited funds that exist."

The bill aims to integrate anti-violence work across US foreign assistance programs, making ending violence against women and girls a diplomatic priority, especially in conflict and crisis situations.

* * *

BUT while legislators in the US are looking at ways to bring domestic politics) will to address violence against women to the global level, legislators in the Philippines are backtracking on their accomplishments to women.

In a statement, women's organizations expressed their dismay at the "unbundling" of the ratification of the Beijing+15 conference outcomes report on the Magna Carta of Women (MCW).

The day before, both Senate and House members of the committee ended their deliberations, with the Senate upacidly ratifying the report as it is, as after and done.

But it was a different story in the House, with House leaders, primarily Deputy Speakers Raul del Mar and Amelito Villarosa, insisting that ratification by the House be delayed until an amendment being pushed by Catholic bishops is re-inserted in the consolidated bill. Speaker Prospero Nograles has also repeatedly confirmed that the bishops be "appeased," and President Macapagal-Arroyo is said to have threatened to veto the bill unless the bishops are "happy" with the completed version of the Magna Carta.

At issue, the bishops' insistence that the "ethical" Endley during the deliberations of the House committee on women, Benny Tayag, who represents herself as speaking for the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines "wants the's consolidated bill to include a definition of the word "ethical" in a provision dealing with family planning. It called for the provision of "responsible, legal, medically safe and effective methods of family planning" for women. If (respondent Tayag), members of Congress voted against the inserted of the word "ethical," saying this brought religious and cultural sensitivities to the issue, and that anything "legal" was by inference "ethical." (Besides, who is to decide on whether a family planning method is "ethical" or not?)

During the bicameral conference, it was agreed that the word "ethical" be dropped from the final, consolidated bill.

* * *

UNETHICAL, certainly, is the move of the House leadership, tampering with the final agreed version of a bill that had gone through the mill of legislative processes, and holding hostage the rights of women, ending them to the authority of men, in this case, the conservative Catholic bishops [and the Muslim religious leaders].

Having lost the battle on the floor of both the Senate and the House, the bishops instead resort to skulking through the corridors of power, buttonholing the will of thousands of women who had participated in the consultations that led to the drafting of the Magna Carta. Why should a few men in robes and their women friends assume on possessing their privileged position hold sway over the will of women who toil in our fields, factories, offices and homes?

As the women remind the legislators: "You call it to allow members of the House of Representatives: The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action which are higher ETHICAL standards ratified by 185 countries representing most faith and cultures. Please ratify, without further delay, the Bicam Committee Report on the Magna Carta of Women and Abolish the Unethical measure that is against UN-ETHICAL to the democratic process it went through."

* * *

AS IT is, a most valuable opportunity has already been lost. If had been, (right) on the dawn of suppression to have the Magna Carta signed into law in time for March 8, International Women's Day, strengthening its symbolic power.

But it seems that in this country, under this government, the rights of women, the poor, the weak, and of legislators, is of little consequence when weighed against the undemocratic voices of prelates.

Bank accounts of our heroes

LOOKING BACK

Sonbeth R. Cayanlyo

WHEN KENTUCKY FRIED CHICKEN TRIED TO re-brand itself into something more modern and healthy than the "finger-lickin'" cholesterol favorite created by Colonel Sanders, it simply went on an ad campaign and re-named itself "KFC." If you remember "food" from the name, it becomes more acceptable.

Another example of clever branding is "HSBC," which advertises itself as a global bank. To be global is more downplaying "Hongkong Shanghai Banking Corp." and choosing how many branches they have worldwide outside China. The dash I'll BC after Commerce also makes it more like a very contemporary bank, a modern institution that has actually been around—in the Philippines for over a century. Sometimes HSBC holds me in instance ties with the Philippines because no other bank has a million endorsement from none other than the National Hero himself. In one of his letters to his family, Rizal said that remittances and exchange rates are better with HSBC.

But Rizal was not the only HSBC client. Another client of the bank was none other than Emilio Aguinaldo who deposited the money paid him by the Americans for the sale of a certain gunboat to take a break from the revolution by putting into exile in Hong Kong. The revolutionaries in exile did not agree on the way the money was handled. Aguinaldo deposited the money in HSBC and the account of the present Standard Chartered Bank, which merged that HSBC branch with it, was touched and that concerns would flow on the interest from those funds. Some greedy thing being exile wanted to divide the money and when Aguinaldo refused, they took him to court. Aguinaldo elected the court summons by traveling to Singapore, and from there to Saigon. He who commanded him to return to the Philippines and resume the fight against Spain. That, of course, is another story.

Rizal's letter to his family, dated from Dapitan Feb ginto (the ancestor of Bank of the Philippine Islands) and HSBC on Oct. 6, 1896 in Rizal's family's estates. The bank gave these replies:

"Known Exposed Filipino, Manila: In reply to your communication of the 26th received today relating to the embargo of the assets of Andres Aonbonio and Candido Garcia, I state that none of these individuals have funds nor stocks, nor shares, nor securities, nor metals of any kind in this bank. The assets are no longer by Monasterio Bailen and was dated Oct. 14, 1896.

"Hongkong Shanghai (sic) Banking Corporation, Manila. In answer to your communication of the 14th of this month received this afternoon, may we state that the individuals Andres Bonifacio and Candido Garcia do not have any kind of deposit in this establishment either in cash or stocks. The hope we have (completed) with your order." This certificate was signed by E. R. Cornelio, agent, since on Oct. 14, 1896.

As late as Oct. 23, 1896 another certificate from Aduardo Gutierrez de la Encenada Publica, Principal de Manila, stated that Andres Bonifacio, Aniceto Catubao, Martin Dionisio, Alejandro Santiago, Modesto Espenol, Captain Ramon, and Candido Garcia "do not figure in our books as contributors."

My initial excitement when I first looked at these documents turned to frustration when I realized that Bonifacio was not an HSBC Premiere client, but then wouldn't it be logical for him to withdraw all his money before the outbreak of the revolution? What if he opened and maintained a dollar account with the bank's Singapore branch?

While this investigation turned out to be a dud, the other names that appear in the certificates give us other people who were involved in the Katipunan and are missing from our pantheon of heroes and patriots. One local name out to be a hero is Aniceto Catubao. I'm sure he's been expunged to not upset to complete the heroes of the Philippine Revolution.

Comments are welcome at sonbeth@inquirer.net.

Birthday calendars

I AM SURPRISED THAT FILIPINOS HAVEN'T CAUGHT ON to a fourth tradition, the ever-lasting calendar set up for birthdays and anniversaries. Like Filipinos, the fourth are big on birthdays, and the resounding calendar, which I'll now refer to as "day calendar" for simplicity, is indispensable to help remember all those birthdays of significant others).

The day calendar looks like a regular calendar with one exception. For example the January day numbers 1 to 31 are each followed by a dotted line. The difference is that these calendars don't indicate the day of the week. This way it goes to be used for many years.

That in fact is part of its charm: you just keep adding on names and the year of birth of that relative or friend. What happens then is that the day calendar becomes a family chronicle.

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

I've had mine for several years, dating back to the 1990s when I was living in Amsterdam. The calendar itself, which has pictures of late Gogh paintings, carries special meaning because it came from a close colleague, a French professor. Her name was then Christine Lecler, and on the 4th day of January, Marie (1968), labor taints, I added the names and birthdays of my parents, my sister and her family, and then various relatives and friends.

The calendar reflects the kinds of relationships we have. In my case, I ended up having more names of friends than relatives, since I left the Philippines when I was in my early 20s. Since, when I first he several years. Officemates from an NGO were also important for me, as were if I stopped working there in 2000, I still send them birthday greetings.

90 years

The calendar was quite "stagnant" in the early part of this new century. Just like picked up names on it, I began to add some family. It now looks more "Filipino" in the sense of an extended family—one of my family is quite unorthodox, to say the least, but let me just say I now have entries ranging from the grandmother of an occasional partner, with 1917 as her year of birth, down to a baby born in 2007. The entries are in different colors, depending on the left of the pen I had at the time, and reflect the various stages of my memory and duties, the handwriting has slight variations, reminding me of the different kinds of moods I had recording the birthdays: always joyful, but, with the young addition, with a bit more pride and love of devotion.

There's 90 years of family history in this calendar, but it continues to be a work in progress. No more babies (Guinness has words?), but older people might still make it to the calendar.

A few weeks ago my father suddenly asked me, "Is it the 15th day of January?" It was already February, so I was startled, but I quickly realized he meant the Chinese lunar calendar. I quickly looked at the date and found it was on the 16th of the lunar dates and he was right, and I know why he was asking. It was my paternal grandmother's birthday.

I realized, too, that I didn't have her on my birthday calendar. One reason was that she passed away 20 years ago, way before I started the calendar. Another reason was the example of my father's mother, whose birthday I didn't know. A lunar calendar shifts constantly in relation to the solar. So, this year the 15th day of the 1st lunar month fell on Feb. 9, but last year it fell on Feb. 28. Confused? The actual date of birth of my grandmother, on the solar calendar, was March 1, 1895.

Birthdays and death anniversaries, including those of the departed, are important in Taiwan (Chinese/Filipino) culture, with incense offered on those days, so eventually I'll have to figure out an entry for that grandmother, who was a very important figure in my clan.

You might be asking if the ritual should be included in the calendar. I don't see why they shouldn't be. For him: FC: I have one entry: Miss Perla de los Santos (1939), an amazing physician who I worked with shortly after I graduated from college, and a major influence in my life. She passed away two years ago but she remains in my calendar, very much alive as far as I'm concerned.

The day calendar can be used for anniversaries, but it's **keeping** for birthdays, maybe a subconscious way of saying that even after they pass away, these friends and relatives remain very much alive in terms of memories.

Do it yourself

Here for a bit of audio-epilogy: The recipient this Kalendar is very much part of Dutch culture. Aand in most homes. Sure, millions of people have calendars in the kitchen, or in the living room, and in the dining room, and in the bedroom, not in this kitchen. The Dutch are one of the most practical people in the world, and they consider birthday reminders to so important that they should come first thing in the morning. You guessed it, it's found in the toilet, right next to the Bible. Just wonderful you don't drop the phone...splash...while writing your greeting.

As a guest using my Dutch friends' toilets, I've found myself doing a bit of "writing" anthropology, marveling at how many names are in the calendars. I've found some homes with really old calendars, entries in fountain pen, written out with care. Most are computer-generated, and there are many calendars are also considered antiques, and can be quite expensive.

Are there day calendars available here? I remembered had a good one some years back, with lovely cartoon drawn by Robert Alejandro, but it stopped production, and the one copy I gave away—to a Dutch friend, who loved it because it was so different.

It should be easy to make your own or this age of computers and digital photography, and it can make for a good family or office activity, bringing together all the birthdays, appointing someone to take care of updating it.

There's many types of calendars, including the design theme. I've seen paintings of Dutch interiors, landscapes, antiques. You can omit the year of birth for an office calendar, but home calendars need to have the dates for some time perspective.

I've been asked if pets can be included. Why not? Pets' birthdays may be difficult to track, but go for it with dogs, cats, horses, whatever, whoever. They're family too, often more than the human ones.

Integrative Medicine Conference

The UP College of Medicine, Clinical Alumni and the Institutes of Health Medical Center will be sponsoring a Conference on Integrative Medicine this weekend, from 14 to 15 March, at the ASEAN Suite, UP College of Medicine. Among the keynote, followed by former Health Secretary Jaime Galvez Tan on Filipino medicine and Dr. Isidro Sia on family-ical plants. Other practitioners from the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand and France will lecture and hold practical workshops on alternative and complementary therapies like Chinese herbal medicine, acupuncture, acupressure, reflexology, homeopathy, speech and breath therapies. The most informative will ignore Imagen at the UP Pharmaceutical Institutes of Medicine (536-1110) or Diana Bunsa (474-8127, 3965-1861).

'Quite an achievement' for the Arroyo administration

LETTERS

TO FILIPINOS WHO STILL BELIEVE that the Philippines is a "show window" of democracy in Asia, it may come as a shock to know that the world doesn't seem to think so anymore. This is reflected in the article of Larry Diamond, a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and the Freeman Spogli Institute at Stanford University, USA, in Newsweek's Special Edition 2009 (December 2008 to February 2009).

"In Nigeria, the Philippines and once again in Pakistan, democracy is floundering amid massive corruption, weak governance and loss of public faith," writes Larry Diamond, author of many books on international affairs. "Since the start of the democratic wave in the 1980s[,] 24 states have reversed in authoritarian rule ... and (if one takes seriously the definition of democracy) Nigeria and the Philippines as well." On the other hand, "Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim country, has become a robust democracy nearly a decade after its turbulent transition from authoritarian rule."

Diamond's article, titled "How to Fix the World: A Guide for the Next Administration," confirmed what Steven Rogers wrote in "Open Democracy" a publication of the School of Society, City University of London, on August 31, 2005, more than four years ago. Rogers observed that President Macapagal-Arroyo, was "fighting for survival" due to national charges of election fraud and corruption. "The crisis threatens to undo one of the developing world's longest-running experiments in democracy, and bears examination by proponents of democratic transition everywhere," said Rogers.

In short, the Arroyo administration has chastised the Philippine image as a "show window," a paradigm and a "model of democracy" for emerging countries. This is due to the administration's pervasive evil corruption, rampant violation of human rights and foul governance which has spread poverty to more than 90 percent of Filipinos (according to the CIA), the highest in Asia, next only to Bangladesh. Consequently, President Barack Obama, who has told anchor stations and corrupt leaders that they are in "the wrong side of history" in his inaugural speech, is not expected to look kindly at the Arroyo administration.

The image of the Philippines as a "show window" of freedom and democracy for developing countries after the 1986 overthrow of the Marcos dictatorship has been smashed in just eight years of Arroyo's administration. Quite an "achievement." It took Marcos 20 years to do it.

—RUSSELL ALBARES,
spokesman,
Movement for Truth in History
(MOVIT),
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Repeating what US did to WWII Filipino vets

IT IS WITH A HEAVY HEART THAT I read the story of Filipino veterans fed by Hamcorn, 85, who while waiting for his turn to be registered and validated at the US Department of Veteran Affairs (USDVA) convulsed and collapsed. In a few minutes he was proclaimed brain-dead. He was there so that he could get the compensation the United States government promised him more than 60 years ago, though in such a pittance. Hamcorn may get his $9,000 compensation by marking an "X" on his papers with the help of a USDVA staff, but what about the other 240,000 to 250,000 Filipino veterans who fought so valiantly in World War II.

The sad reality here is that the US government leaded the Filipino veterans to fight alongside American soldiers but after the war was won, it abandoned them, reducing valiant Filipino freedom fighters to a pitiful group struggling to be recognized and compensated for fighting invaders. Now comes the Bilateral Defense Treaty (MDT) and the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) which were basically formed using the same premise. US troops are here in the country supposedly to help us but in fact are just protecting their country's political, economic and military interests. They conduct many medical and engineering missions but at what price? At the price of our sovereignty and our independence. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is fighting inside and until just to protect these missions. Heaven help us this very year. Know that under these agreements, US troops can claim indemnification when they get injured or killed during the exercises? What is worse though is the damage the exercises will cause on the lives of more Filipinos.

The United States is doing to us now what it did to the Filipino veterans then, except that now it is doing it to the whole country. The VFA is perpetuating the US government's duplicity and is fostering inequality. The Arroyo regime and the Armed Forces of the Philippines should see through this or are they just too servile to the United States to do anything about it?

—JOCELYN BOÑA,
spokesperson,
Bat Bulilitan,
batbulilitan@gmail.com

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Defending dictators and pilloryings victims

IN AN INTERVIEW WITH RADIO STATION dwIT Omnicon, 2/5/09, Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile said that the Aquino family must have known the identities of the masterminds of Ninoy Aquino's murder (Inquirer.net, 2/6/09). "If I were the president of the Philippines, I would know," Enrile said, and addressing to Mr. Aquino, he made this insulting remark: "Why wouldn't you know who murdered your husband? If you don't know that, what kind of President are you?" he asked, adding that Mr. Aquino should have made finding the killers her top priority. These are words coming from the mouth of a former defense minister of the Marcos dictatorship.

If there is anyone who should know who are the masterminds of the Aquino assassination, then it is for sure Enrile himself who is now an honorable senator. What kind of senator is he? It is he, Enrile, who should have made it his top priority, to ask forgiveness from the Filipino people for his misdeeds as defense minister, as well as for the misdeeds of his boss, ferdinand Marcos. It is he who should have put behind bars the masterminds, instead of the hit guy.

This matches the guilt to occupy a seat in the Philippine Senate. Enrile, and together with his colleague Miriam Defensor Santiago, brings disgrace to that body by carelessly crying in concert the misdeeds of another "dictator" and her husband. What kind of people do we allow to run our government?

—RENATO PAVIGAN,
ppavi@yahoo.com

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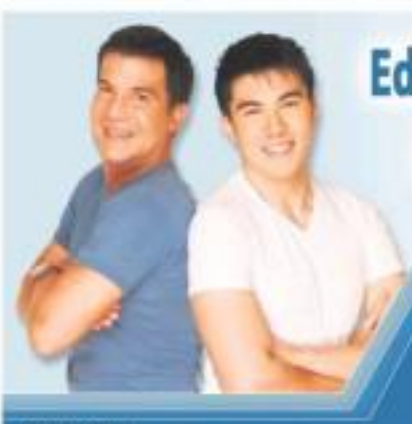
Warming volleys

LAST FEBRUARY, two armed nuclear subs, one British and the other French, collided in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. Of course, if we keep visiting the dive long enough, accidents should be expected. Hundreds of nuclear and weapons still operational, we may soon find these weapons also deployed to space where the US and Russian satellites also recently clustered into each other.

How many more warning volleys will we get? The world needs better political and national means of settling conflicts. As examples, we could have a World Court which adjudicates territorial disputes over states, and we could have a Parliamentary Assembly at the United Nations that helps build consensus among peoples to enable gradual disarmament.

Of course, some may feel this path is also a gamble. But isn't maintaining huge nuclear cooperation a better bet than gambling with human destruction via nuclear catastrophe?

—LARRY KAZDOI,
vice president,
World Federalist Movement-Canada
Vancouver Branch,
#203, 22 Water St.,
Vancouver, B.C.
V6B 1A1



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EDC 2009 Geothermal Conference

energy 30 years of geothermal energy progress and innovations

MESSAGES

My warmest congratulations to the Energy Development Corporation as you host the 30th year of its EDC Geothermal Conference.

I am proud to note that the conference has continued to remain a key growth of the geothermal industry and now really recognized and respected in the world. And on its 30th year, the annual conference has already established itself as an important platform to contribute to discoveries and innovations in the industry which has served for our country the recognition of being a world leader in geothermal energy.

I salute the men and women of EDC for their unwavering dedication to geothermal development and earnest efforts to increase the country's energy self-sufficiency. I am confident that the EDC Geothermal Conference will continue to serve as an important avenue to further develop the industry.

Warmly saying more!

I convey my warmest greetings and congratulations to Energy Development Corporation for another successful year of the EDC Geothermal Conference.

The theme, as it is aptly called, is interested in the geothermal history of the Philippines. It has served not only as an important milestone of geothermal but has also shaped out to the very effectively as a people in progress and innovative energy.

May this year's conference create a big difference again in the geothermal industry not only here in the Philippines but in the world.

The timing of the conference could not have been more auspicious. Like any other sustainable forms of energy, geothermal is an essential tool for developing every country's own without having to rely on imported. I applaud the efforts, foresight and innovative spirit of the pioneers who harnessed this immense indigenous resource from and turned it into a practical and sustainable source of power.

Moreover, in the years to come, the Geothermal Conference has continually enriched the study and practicability of geothermal energy. And so I look forward to celebrating with you 50 more milestones to the coming years.

Congratulations! And best wishes for continued success.

The country's largest producer of geothermal energy and acknowledged world leader in wet steamfield technology, Energy Development Corporation (EDC), is holding its 30th Annual Geothermal Conference (Geocon) on March 11 to 12, 2009 at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel. This year's theme is "30 Years of Geothermal Energy Progress and Innovations."

Cold-line debrine and Re-Injection

Cold-line embrittlement

Calcine embrittlement

Well enhancement technology

EDC has been setting the pace in geothermal development in the country and through the Geocon has showcased its developed expertise and provided practical solutions and innovations to geothermal technology. From its humble beginnings in the late 70s, the EDC Geocon has evolved into one of the world's major geothermal conferences. It continues to provide a venue for both local and foreign geothermal experts to present technical papers, share experiences and ideas on geothermal science and engineering.

This year's Geocon is expected to be attended by nearly 300 foreign and local geothermal experts, scientists, engineers, and those from the academe from countries with geothermal power development such as Iceland, USA, Japan, Kenya, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, as well as China, Taiwan and South Korea.

Limitless possibilities in geothermal technologies

EDC has developed many homegrown technologies to overcome problems and practical solutions that are also being used in other fields.

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• On-line Steam Purity Monitoring (SPM): Installed in all EDC production fields since 1996, the system provides an accurate, efficient and continuous real-time data for immediate response of the field operators to system upsets.

• Calcite Inhibition Technology: EDC developed in-house proprietary, cold-welded scale inhibitor to control calcite deposition in acidic well bores and lines, and developed field monitoring techniques for determination of inhibitor efficiency, optimized and fine-tuned treatment schedule and calcite deposition potential and rates based on scaling modeling.

• Acid Well Utilization: A method for determining flow characteristics and for long-term use with environment-conscious guidelines.

• Downhole Sampling using the Kuster-Sigma-Aquila (KSA) Tool: EDC made innovations to the original Kuster tool on downhole sampling, including improvements in the tool casing, adaptation of chain and locking mechanism, development of the break-off glass, and the nitrogen charging.

• Enhanced Thermowell: Acetic thermowell for geothermal and other applications was recently designed, fabricated, and tested. The unique features of the instrument are 1) its unique

• Well Enhancement Technology: Well Discharge Optimization: EDC has gained advanced expertise in effectively stimulating well discharge using air compressors and nitrogen gas lifting that will be well suited to Philippine conditions.

• Well Workover: A comprehensive approach covering all aspects of the workover operations from well candidate evaluation to post-job analysis of results.

EDC will continue to explore and develop technologies that will promote the use of geothermal energy globally and help maximize its contribution to the world's power supply mix.

For more information on EDC and the 2009 Geocon, please visit www.energy.com.ph.

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INQUIRER Northern Luzon

BAGUIO City's pony boy is nothing without his horse.

Baguio City's 'pony boys' in a changing landscape

By Roland Ruivera
Contributor

MINDANAO, A PRIDE! mixed among Baguio City's Wright Park pony boys for its tall, broad and brawny stance, gave a much-needed scrub and bath from his handlers as dusk.

Taking a spot lined with parked cars along a curb on Harper Road in Barangay Pacdal, the horse swung its tail in the coolness of the water cascading through its body.

Tourists have left for the day and routine dictates the pony boys to primp up Mindanao again for tomorrow's snack as the horse would not only look its best but also smell good enough to be chosen by a discerning patron who could easily be turned off by an animal that smells like a "horse."

Mindanao's grooming kit consists of at least two sachets of shampoo, a laundry soap and a barrel of water—all to mask the natural odor of a horse, considered offensive by the pony boys' clients.

Bathing a horse is so important to the pony boys' worth as hustling their charge, says Felix Otero, a social science student of the University of the Philippines Baguio who did an ethnographic study of Baguio's pony boys.

Baguio Centennial

Otero says this is done because typically it is up to the customer to pick his or her ride home, so the pony boy goes to greater lengths to make his horse stand out among the lot. The pony boy gives special attention to the overall physical appearance of his horse and the person "who would like to ride [it]."

Horses at the Wright Park area, in particular, they boys classify them as dwarf, small and big. The first two sizes cater to children while the bigger ones are for adult and experienced riders.

There is no doubt, however, that Mindanao, an enamel Amanar he was brought from Mindanao to Baguio, is the pick of the stable.

His handlers say it is the defending champion in the games from last year's Benguet Arbrey Festival. If Mindanao would seven out of place being huffed and puffed in a spot lined with cars, Grace Cabacar Jacob, assistant professor of language and literature at UP Baguio, says the image is not a disconcert.

"Horses are the cars of their times," she says in her paper, "In search of the Benguet cowboy." She refers to the "cowboys" of Benguet as taking pride in the appearance of their steed as one does with a car today.

"An unkempt horse's fast is considered a poor man's horse," she says.

Benguet cowboy

Jacobs debunks the popular notion that the Benguet cowboy is an American construct. She says cattle ranches, called "ranchos," existed in Baguio and Benguet long before the arrival of the Americans such that the pre-Commonwealth "cowboys" were, in fact, called "pastor" (shepherds).

The emergence of many myths that created iconic myth of the Mt. Province Man, enabled Benguet cowboys to latch on to a current image, thus allowing them to "rule" over the culture that are already present in their culture," Jacobs says.

"Eventually, the wide open spaces that existed in Baguio and Benguet all the way to Baguio in Ifi. Province, were called 'shadows country' effectively becoming a range where boots, jeans and denim jacket clad Igorots came to the tune of American country music," she says.

But it is due to the shrinking of the "range" that transformed the pastel to the pony boy that we know today.

UP Baguio Prof. Bienvenido Tigang, an economist, says changing land use patterns in Baguio and Benguet over a period reduced the size of grazing land for cattle, displacing the ranchers.

With large scale cattle raising no longer viable, the pastel was forced to seek "alternative employment," Tigang says.

The conversion of cattle grazing land to golf courses and residential areas transformed the pastel into a peddler catering to a new mode of consumption: Tourism.

For a fee, tourists and residents alike can now ride the pastel's horses and roam around the changing landscape of Baguio with him as guide.

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Across the NATION

Panlilio reveals STL irregularities

Gov says receipt absence shows shady character of gov't game

'How can the PCSO make a real accounting ... if this is the way the supposed legal game is run?'

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—SMALL TOWN LOTTERY (STL) operators in Pampanga do not issue proper receipts for bet payments or print serial numbers on bet tickets, Gov. Eddie Panlilio said.

There, he said, are pieces of evidence that the STL as a business, although government-sanctioned, is not strictly monitored and that the game, albeit legal, is used as front for the illegal numbers game (jueteng) that the government seeks to eliminate.

"The question (bet slips) don't have serial numbers. Anybody can have these printed. Also, the [unit of] numbers maped on a written on number sheet, not on these yellow slips with PCSO (Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office)-STL mark," Panlilio said.

"No receipts are also issued. How can the PCSO make a real accounting of the money that goes to STL if this is the way the supposed legal game is run?" he said.

Reynaldo Quiñones, PCSO STL project manager, urged Panlilio to formally report the information he gathered to the agency's legal department.

Henry Alejandro, chief of the PCSO Pampanga district office, said STL bet slips issued to bettors are signed by the cobrador who takes the draw and date when the bets were wagered.

"They already the receipts," he said in a phone interview.

The yellow slips are issued over the area managers value, in turn, requisitioned the copies in the PCSO district office.

"It operates in a system of trust," Alejandro said.

He said cobradores are being rationed to use handheld machines that issue thermal receipts similar to those given out from lotto terminals.

He could not say when the PCSO or Suzuwa Gaming Corp., which got the permit to operate the STL in Pampanga, bought those machines. He said these are being used now in Apalit town.

Panlilio said he ordered the interrogation on the supposed irregularity in STL operations when he asked four of his friends in the City of San Fernando, Bacolor and two other towns to wage on STL last week.

Because of them, he said the STL and jueteng systems are "very similar."

The two games, according to him, differed only in number combinations and prize money.

The STL uses a pair of numbers from 1 to 40. In jueteng, it used to be 1 to 37. The payment for every peso waged on a winning number pair fetched P800 in STL [only P700 goes to the winner; the P100 shared by cobrador (bet collector) and cabo (area manager)]. In jueteng, it goes over P1,000.

While the cobradores store ID cards presenting themselves as sales agents of Suzuwa, they answered "Bong Pineda" when asked who operated STL.

Pineda's son, Lalaine Mayor Dennis Pineda, said Panlilio should stop dragging his father in the STL and jueteng issue.

"Para na lang silat, pamumulik sila. Eh's politiko[ng]," Mayor Pineda told the Inquirer.

The elder Pineda's name is not listed as an owner or incorporator of Suzuwa. Dennette Empleo, Inquirer Central Luzon

In Quezon, 'jueteng' is rampant again

LUCENA, CITY—THE ILLEGAL numbers game jueteng has started to proliferate again in Quezon province, a sign that politicians are now raising funds for their bids in the 2010 elections.

Reports of jueteng's spread prompted the province's police chief to warn all municipal police chiefs to stop the illegal numbers game or face immediate removal from their posts.

Senior Supt. Pidel Pinatas, Quezon police chief, said jueteng was derailing the government-sanctioned numbers game Small Town Lottery (STL).

"It should be the only numbers game operating because it is legal and sanctioned by the government," Pinatas said.

Church leaders said some local officials, particularly in the central parts of the province, have allowed the return of jueteng and coddle that illegally collect bets for STL in grassroots bazils for their campaigns in 2010.

A group of Church lay workers in this city said proceeds from the illegal numbers game will be used to buy votes.

Pinatas said illegal bookies and jueteng are trying to make a comeback in the province, particularly in Tiaong town.

"We already have the identities of some of the operators. Once they make false moves, they will be immediately arrested," he said.

Police and military intelligence sources identified a certain "Ka Loding" as one of the people behind the operation of jueteng. This operator's network reaches northern and central Luzon, said the sources.

In an earlier interview, Lucena Bishop Emilio Marquez urged residents to expose local government officials who will allow jueteng.

Jose Gonzales, operations manager of Pinasonic Corp., the STL franchise holder in Quezon province, urged police to stop jueteng because it was hurting STL operations.

"These illegal operations eat up huge portions of STL revenues," he said in a phone interview. Jhiffa T. Mullet-Un, Inquirer Southern Luzon

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Experts say pine pollen rain in Baguio good

BAGUIO CITY—RESIDENTS MISTAKENLY thinking thick blanket of dust accumulating on windowpanes and car windshields to be destroying leading number experts to suspect that the phenomenon may be safe/beneficial instead.

But the Environmental Management Bureau has concluded that Baguio has been benefiting from a shower of pine tree pollen.

Experts have confirmed that pine trees at the National Camp John Hay have flowering and fertilizing pine cones, and the pollen these cones disperse have been described by foresters as "not prolific."

Tourists who mistook the fine powder covering the air recently for volcanic ash have also been reassured about their dusty cars.

The increased levels of particulates caused by the wind were detected by an air quality monitoring machine stationed at downtown Baguio.

"The level of particulates matter in the air was still fair (apparently, below 150 micrograms per cubic meter). To reach dangerous levels, the particulates should reach 300 mg/cu.m. But others are scanned the data (from 1) of the machine), are saw yellow granules (embedded along) with the soot," Moreno said.

"This should be good news. The dust has an organic source, and did not come from the combustion engines of vehicles. This means we are talking to reserve. We are going to see new pine trees. Should yours/ones only if you (you have allergies) or have asthma," he said.

DENR personnel said the frequency and volume of these pollen showers were unusual. "We don't know yet if (this) (the impact) of climate change," Moreno said.

This is the period for pine tree pollination. "We are told the process takes place between February and March," he said.

But what caught government's attention was the fact that the rapidly-diverse pollen production was unusual for the local Benguet pine species, he said.

Moreno also said the gust of wind, which disperses the pollen over wider section of Baguio was "50 percent stronger compared to wind speeds of the previous months (of February)."

The air quality machine recorded the wind speed of that period.

According to a 1984 study of the defunct Philippine Forest Research Institute (PFRI), Benguet pine trees grow cone-shaped flowers between December and March. Once the cones mature, they "disperse pollen grains 15 to 20 days after emergence," says the study abstract of retired forester Alberto Agpaoa.

The city has been undertaking massive reforestation and advocacy campaigns to replenish its pine cover as it continues its water reserves.

Moreno said some of the city's watersheds are depleted, except for the pine forests of Camp John Hay. Flaviano Cabrera, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Group raises alarm on rise of cervical cancer cases

LUCENA CITY—THE STRAIN in the number of cervical cancer sufferers in the country has alarmed an alliance of health workers that aims to combat the disease.

"The number of cervical cancer victims in the Philippines is quite alarming," said Fr. Cecilia Ledesco-Lim, director of the Cervical Cancer Prevention (Cecap) Network program in an interview at an International Women's Day rites.

"The tragedy is that 56 percent of Filipino women with cervical cancer will die within five years of diagnosis from a disease that is wholly preventable," she said.

Cecap is an alliance of government and private health workers, nongovernment organizations, who are helping cervical cancer sufferers.

Lim said Cecap has been conducting awareness campaigns, seminars and lectures across the country to enlighten Filipino women on how to combat the disease.

Deadlier

Cervical cancer has remained as the second most common cancer among Filipino women, according to a Cecap study.

Citing disturbing figures, Lim said that the recorded cervical cancer incidences in the country have increased from an annual average of 9,338 new cases in 1998 to 7,277 new cases in 2005.

The disease said that of the total cases of cervical cancer each year, 33 percent, or one of every three afflicted, die in a year, and 73 percent, or nearly three of every four of new cases, lead to death in five years.

Lim said that in the Philippines and in many parts of the world, cervical cancer is second only to breast cancer as the most common deadly disease among women.

However, cervical cancer is deadlier, said Lim. She said for every four women who survive breast cancer, only two will survive cases of the cervix.

Late diagnosis

"Here in the Philippines, most of the victims are diagnosed very late and nothing much can be done about it," she said during a forum here attended by about 300 people, mostly women.

Though she cited poverty as one underlying factor for the increase in the number of cervical cancer cases, Lim said the main problem is the lack of awareness among women.

She complained that pap smear test is a good method to detect cervical cancer but said it has limitations as it requires laboratory setups some hospitals are not equipped for.

Lim said cervical cancer is "highly preventable because it has a long pre-cancerous period during which it may be detected and stopped."

Cecap pushes for the adoption of the "single visit approach" in the government program against cervical cancer wherein a patient who tested positive will be treated of her pre-malignant cervical lesion during that same visit.

Lim said Cecap and the approach is appropriate for developing countries. Delfin C. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

MANMADE
Tourists try out some of the facilities at the 18-hectare Lago del Rey mountain lake that was opened recently as a tourism facility by Camarines Sur Gov. Shay Villafuerte. Camarines Sur officials said the manmade lake could be the biggest in the country. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NBI hunts mastermind in shooting of radioman

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—THE National Bureau of Investigation is now hunting the alleged mastermind in the shooting of Radio Mindanao Network anchorman Nilo Labares after he was wounded by one of the suspects who surrendered to police.

Lawyer Jose Jesus Fuy, acting NBI acting regional director, said Tuesday that the NBI has filed a frustrated murder charge against the alleged gunman identified as Bernard Aguilar and two other alleged conspirators.

"A certain 'Baby Chang' has been identified as the boss of Aguilar. This person remains at large but we already filed similar charges against this alleged mastermind for preliminary inquest," Fuy said.

Fuy said Aguilar has refused to divulge information about "Baby Chang" and invoked his right to remain silent.

Aguilar and Baby Chang are alleged to be operators of illegal gambling in the city.

Another suspect, Jessie Cuizon, who was earlier reported as one of the gunmen, was not included in the charges because of lack of evidence.

Labares, who is still recuperating in the hospital due to a penetrated liver and damaged kidney, positively identified Aguilar as the one who shot him.

"He already have a sworn statement from Labares and from two other credible witnesses pinpointing Aguilar. So I think we have a strong case against this person and his cohorts," said Fuy.

Fuy said the NBI was coordinating with Task Force Labares in the manhunt.

Yap also appealed to the Department of Justice to give protection to the witnesses.

"Before we got hold of the two witnesses, they were already being harassed and even receiving threats. We are now asking on getting them under the witness protection program," said Fuy.

Labares was riding a motorcycle on his way home at around 9:30 am on March 5 when he was shot and wounded. Labares proceeded to have a gun to ward off the assailants, police said. Rita Cecilia Rodriguez, Inquirer Mindanao

Negros execs vow to fight new increases in power rates

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—NEGROS Occidental officials on Tuesday expressed opposition to the 0% per kilowatt hour (kWh) increase in power rates sought by the National Power Corp. (Napocor).

Negros Occidental Gov. Isidro Zayco and the Negros Occidental Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) said they opposed the proposed power rate increase because it would be passed on to consumers.

Zayco asked Vice Gov. Emilio Yulo on Tuesday to pass an SP resolution at its regular session Wednesday that would express Negros Occidental's opposition to the power rate increase.

"It is untimely at this time when people are reeling from the global economic crisis. The power rates should instead be lowered for industries and commercial businesses to survive," he said.

Zayco also called for a congressional inquiry into the power rate increase.

Bacolod City Mayor Evelio Leonardia also said he would resist the power rate increase.

"The increase is untimely and sweeping. It will be a burden to everyone. It does not distinguish between the haves and have-nots," Leonardia said.

Napocor earlier said he believed that the city's Banggunang Pan-lungsod would also come up with a similar stand.

Vicente Saharing Central Negros Electric Cooperative (Ceneco) president, said the Napocor would impose the P1 per kilowatt hour rate hike. Ceneco coverage area is central Negros Occidental and its all cooperatives throughout the Visayas.

Japanese activists join protest vs BNPP revival

OSWALDTHAIN, Bataan—From a World War II memorial in Barangay Layac here, four Japanese peace advocates joined more than 100 Filipino cyclists in a 60-km bike tour to Morong town on Monday to add their voices to the campaign against the revival of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant.

Shigenobu Kodama, Shoji Ochi, Shuji Akamine and Ichiro Hirata—all members of the Japan-based Samsara Peace Cycle Network—rode their bikes on their way to the BNPP in Morong starting at 8:30 a.m.

In the tour that passed through Hermosa, Orani, Samal, Abucay and Pilar towns and Balanga City, public school students waved green flags and leaves to welcome the cyclists.

Members of the Pan Bikers Club, Bataan Cycling Club, Orani Cycling Association and Bluewriter Cycling Association joined the group along the way.

Balanga stop

The peace cycle, now on its 15th year in General Luna, was expected to reach Morong at past 3 p.m. after passing through Bagac town, according to Antonio Bengzal of the Nuclear-Free Bataan Movement, this year's partner of the campaign.

JAPANESE Ichiro Hirata and three other members of the Samsara Peace Cycle Network promote peace and life by biking in areas threatened by war and globalization. On Monday, they supported the campaign against the revival of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant in Morong, Bataan. TONY T. CHAVEZ/INQUIRER DATA FILE

The tour made a brief stop in Balanga City to see opposite in Bataan Rep. Herminia Roman to withdraw her support for the BNPP revival plan, said Mayor Antonio Ocampo.

In Morong, the cyclists were expected to join the torch parade that would end on Napot Point where the BNPP stands.

Bells starting 1973 under the martial rule of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, the BNPP was completed in 1985 at the cost of $2.3 billion or five times its original cost.

Former President Corazon Aquino ordered it mothballed in 1986 over safety and corruption issues.

But she did not stop the payment for the loans that were used to build it.

Aquino did not lift the closure order following adverse findings of a study by 50 nuclear experts in 1986, according to Dr. Nestor Perlas, then member of the Presidential Commission on the Philippine Nuclear Power Plant.

Hirata said Samsara opposes the BNPP revival plan, made through a bill filed by Pampanga Rep. Mark Cojuangco, due to safety issues and because of the disaster wrought by the bombings of the United States on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.

"The victims (in Hiroshima and Nagasaki) are still suffering from nuclear radiation. Only six are still alive, sick with cancer and leukemia," Hirata said.

Nuclear uses

Nuclear energy, he said, can be used as a source of nuclear armaments.

In Japan, where there are some 50 nuclear power plants, Hirata said it is now true that electricity became cheaper.

"So high cost of construction the plants and operating these increased the cost of electricity, he said.

Many Japanese, he said, continue to worry over possible steam explosions, which can emit radiation, from the nuclear power plants.

"If the cooling water stops, there would be) possible meltdowns, which will encounter nuclear life, permanent bans, land damaged also underwater plants," he said.

The peace cycle, which began on March 6, visited the Bataan Lolia, a group of women raped by members of the Japanese Imperial Army during World War II, and workers in Clark and Subic freeports. Evaristo Ortejas, Inquirer Central Luzon

Buboy, Moorer get Manny in shape

BUBOY FERNANDEZ IS A CERTIFIED boxer-weights at a little over 200 pounds.

Still, the sensible Filipino trainer could feel the power behind the punches thrown by Manny Pacquiao in blasting successive at the Wildcard Gym on Monday.

Wishing the mitts with his bones buddy who happens to be the world's best pound-for-pound fighter, gives Fernandez the adrenalin rush his blasted body solely needs.

According to Sr. Ed de la Vega of Philboxing, Fernandez remained profusely and faithful and pulled-to-between the ole rounds to spar with Pacquiao, but was glad to be released the job by training guru Freddie Roach.

Boxing Hall of Famer Roach left Los Angeles for England on Sunday to work the corner of British lightweight Amir Khan, who hosts Isaac Mendoza legend and two-time Pacquiao victim Marco Antonio Barrera on March 14.

Roach knows his prized ward is in good hands, with Fernandez also nabbing he him in doing the mitts for Pacquiao before his World Boxing Council lightweight showdown with David Diaz last year.

After leading Pacquiao's hands are former light heavyweight and heavyweight champion Michael Moorer, the newest addition to Wild Card's roster of trainers, and Eric Brown.

And Pacquiao doesn't need to be goaded to train hard.

In condemning his preparations for his megabouts bout with British superstar Ricky Hatton on May 2 at the MGM Grand, Pacquiao shadowboxed, pounded the heavy bags, jumped rope and did abdominal exercises.

Pacquiao's routine included hitting the mitts. And Fernandez was happy to oblige.

Meanwhile, GBO Sports' four-episode Pacquiao Finishes 2009 runs until premiere on April 11. It will continue on April 18 and 25 with the final episode dated on May 1. *Ray Lunetta*

Thai, Malaysian track teams joining National Open meet

By Cedelf P. Tupas

AT LEAST THREE FOREIGN squads have confirmed their participation in the 34th National Open Invitational Track and Field Championships to be held for the first time at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex in Linguasa, Pasay City, from May 11 to 15.

Athletics president Go Teng Kok yesterday said in a press conference launching the event that teams from Southeast Asian Games powerhouse Thailand, Malaysia and Hong Kong will see action in the three-day meet.

Bonta, China, Vietnam and Sri Lanka have also been invited to join the meet that is expected to draw about 1,000 local athletes.

Palafox is using the meet to gauge the progress of the 32-man national team, two where in the athletes to the Southeast Asian Games will come.

Wade heroics rescue Heat

MIAMI—DWYANE WADE'S RUNNING three-pointer at the buzzer gave the NBA's leading scorer 40 points and carried the Miami Heat to a 106-107 double-overtime victory over the Chicago Bulls on Monday.

"This is one of those games for the ages," Wade, who also had 12 assists, told reporters after overshadowing a 43-point performance by the Bulls' Ben Gordon.

Wade stole the ball from Chicago's John Salmons and raced down the court before tossing up the three-point shot from just inside the circle.

"When I got the steal (shot) was going through my head was coach said: 'We've got a timeout left,'" said Wade, who had four steals in the game.

"I was about to call it (the timeout) and then I said, 'Nah.'"

How coach Erik Spoelstra was delighted with Wade.

"It's truly amazing," he told reporters. "He ended up with a defensive play like that, a steal off somebody else's nose, and then makes the three at the buzzer."

Referees reviewed the play for more than two minutes, before Wade bounded his hands in the air, officially giving Miami the win.

Michael Beasley had 26 points, Mario Chalmers added 17 and Jamaryr Moon scored 12 for the Heat, who stayed within 1½ games of Atlanta for the No. 4 spot in the Eastern Conference playoff chase.

In Portland, Oregon, Brandon Roy scored 27 points as Portland crushed the Los Angeles Lakers, 113-96, in a game marred by the Trail Blazers' Rudy Fernandez being carried off the court on a stretcher after a hard foul.

Fernandez, a rookie from Spain, was hurt late in the third quarter when he was fouled by Trevor Ariza while going up for a shot. He was carried from the court on a stretcher with his neck in a brace.

Fernandez was conscious and alert when he left the court, and he had full movement of his extremities, the team said. But he was reportedly eating chest pain and was taken to a hospital.

Travis Outlaw added 22 points for the Blazers, who have won 12 straight at the Rose Garden. *Reuters, AP*

COMPLETE NBA RESULTS: Miami 106, New Orleans 101; Detroit 98, Orlando 88; Washington 94, Minnesota 90; Boston 102, Chicago 92; 107, Houston 97; Denver 93, Portland 113; LA Lakers 96

MIAMI Heat's Dwyane Wade (left) goes up for the game-winning shot in front of Chicago Bulls' Brad Miller.

A crusade against Pasa's Mark Joseph

IN HUDDLE

Bert Cole

THE FINAL STRAW in the raging dispute between the Philippine Olympic Committee and the Philippine Sports Commission was the creation of the PSC-Aquatic Sports Task Force recently.

Created by POC chair Peping Cojuangco, with Jose Romasanta as chairman, the task force was given the mandate to "evaluate, train and develop athletes and to supervise and implement programs and policies," the task force might do full justice to all its assigned tasks.

For even a month old, however, the task force may soon be scrapped following the resignation of two of its three members, former national swimmers Jonne Pipa and lawyer Lia Antipal Mendoza.

In their letter, they cited the main standing is Jo Ramon "Caribo" Pipa, the vice president of the Philippine Amateur Swimming Association (Pasa) and chair of the task force.

* * *

Pipa and Mendoza handed in their resignation effective March 9.

"The ongoing conflict involving Pasa, I believe, is no longer a simple power struggle, but rather it has turned into a vulnerable offending care [and] unfortunately all national sports organizations (NSOs)," an excerpt from Jonne Pipa's letter read.

"I have already consulted my lawyer, Atty. Lia Mendoza, and we are in the process of preparing and formalizing the resignation letter addressed to Chairman Mark Joseph. Considering that the cold compliance are well within the jurisdiction of the PSC, I have no other option but to tender my resignation from the Task Force due to conflict of interest.

"It is my hope that my efforts to lead this battle will soon inspire other (NSOs) in a similar situation to do the same all for the benefit of Philippine sports and the Filipino athletes."

As of this yesterday afternoon, there was no word if tagging had accepted the resignations. Neither was it made known if the endorsers of the task force would withdraw.

All I know is that Pipa and company are very, very busy preparing to launch a major offensive.

Pipa and her fervent prayers are probably being heard because allies fighting for the same cause have converged in Manila from different parts of the archipelago.

* * *

On Olympic medal of the PBA Legends Foundation USA, dude Ato Ling is setups his most profound condolences to the family of the late Jaime "BJ" Ortiz, who passed away yesterday.

"I would like to personally acknowledge the benevolence that Mr. Ortiz showered on me as a second father. He was always there when I needed love and support, personally during those dark days of my life," the seven-time PBA All-Star said March 6.

"I played the longest of my PBA years with Team Time (where Mr. Ortiz was team manager and governor for all those eight years). Of course, we had our ups and downs and there were times when he showed love as the governor or team, not only as basketball but life in general, and anything under the sun."

* * *

During those admonitions, the said the school team would quietly frown, something all of us felt was fit, would never again his outburst—dished out to the best of the moment—and try to make up for the "counselling sessions."

Piping smiles, cheerily (whichever), "we always hope that we can. The "drunken" anecdote came in the form of a great dinner or a surprise bonus. After that, all our sins were forgiven, and his harsh words, forgotten.

"I loved him so dearly as a benefactor, a manager, a governor, a father and a friend that I missed my youngest son Igor, Igor's second name is Bobbie, the nickname of someone produces considerably by Mr. Ortiz."

In this day-After said his colleagues call him since almost 30 years, Ortiz is a source of their closeness during their PBA years.

As I write this, Mr. Ortiz's remains seem to be cremated. The funeral rigil at the Heritage Memorial Park in Taguig will continue until Thursday, March 12.

Pros and cons of rules changes

HEART, SOUL, SPORTS

Tommy Manotoc

THERE'S A NEW SET OF RULES GOverning trade in the Metro PBA's Swiss Cup, certain to have recipients and as the I am concerned, a lot of downsides as well.

Trade trade are being called with reckless abandon, giving tremendous advantage on the defender players and leaving hapless victims to be left behind in defense and watch the games bonus while preparation like me—looking for a lot more.

There are longer endgames in the PBA today, but longer endgames don't necessarily mean exciting ones. Games become longer because there's time to spare as the few theme line players are being sent there because of trade called based on the new rules.

The new rules will eventually make coverage more crunches to use the zone defense. Players who are known for zone defensive talent will have less playing time.

The final scores will probably be higher and the number of the games will definitely be more on offense.

* * *

Take the case of Alaska's Gabe Norwood, who bet the thirteen points recently in much of the three' their two games increased of 60 points.

Hasn't got me wrong, I'm not saying that Alaska should have won both games had Norwood stayed in there until the end. Having Yeng in there would be the better option in the stretch.

What I am saying is that the final finish called on Yeng were more "another" on the offensive player. They were left-to-their shot could have easily been: yes go on shot the fans can witness the beauty of those games.

Against San Miguel, a total of seven players left the floor because of fouls, Yeng being one of them. Four—all big men—came from San Miguel. There's nothing worse for a losing team than having to inspire to in top load load on.

* * *

The new set of rules has given referees more power and has put the outcome of games primarily in their hands and not on the players, who seems is not there to give him a chance.

It is because of this that Jayvee Jamio, my former player at Ust, comes to mind again. He told me during our championship game not to take this out, despite his five fouls, because he knew what type of finish the game would call for the referees.

But during that time, there was a big difference as far as the setting is concerned. During those days of the PBA, the game further commissioner Leo Prieto stepped into a referees to handle the championship games.

* * *

The PBA technical committee will have to work double time to determine who among the referees interpret the rules properly.

The referees should not be influenced by the rumors created by different players, thus draining the heat.

There has to be a common evaluation of referees after trade games to determine their performances.

The ones who don't perform properly should not be given assignments in important games, especially during the playoffs.

* * *

The Tiger is back, and I am one of those who believe that he will be better than ever.

Even though Tiger Woods lost his second-round match to Tim Clark of South Africa in the Accenture Match Play recently, all things point to a much better player in the months and years to come.

And I'm not just because of a successful operation on his left knee.

Tiger has been gone—even with just one healthy leg.

I remember when former Philippine Open champion Nick Gibbon told me about the Pacific no. 1, whom I quickly said would see his game down-hearted because of marriage.

While practicing our short game at Alabang Country Club, Gibbon offered this brain-like thought.

"When (Tiger) has his first child, he'll play even better," Gibbon said. "But wait until he has his first son, and he will go to a different level."

My fears have just dipped so he aims to win twenty-or-so are a player of Tiger's calibre.

Jack Nicklaus' record of 18 Major titles will be broken in the very near future. I am almost so sure of it.

Send comments to tommymanotoc@yahoo.com

SPORTSWATCH

UST juniors complete UAAP championship double

UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS COMPLETED ANOTHER CHAMPIONSHIP double in the UAAP after its high school contingent topped the division for the third straight year.

Powered by victories in girls' volleyball, girls' swimming and table tennis and second-place finishes in boys' swimming and taekwondo, the Tuborized 66 points, ahead of University of the East (UE) and Ateneo (AT) at the close of the 2008-2009 season on Sunday. *Cedelf P. Tupas*

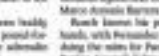
In the men's division, UST won an 11th straight overall championship. UE bagged the titles in boys' volleyball and taekwondo. *Cedelf P. Tupas*

100 fights in SJC's Super Angels derby today

MORE THAN 100 FIGHTERS ARE ON THE ROSTER IN THE SUPER ANGELS 4-Cock Derby hosted by Manila Arnaiz today at San the Juan Coliseum.

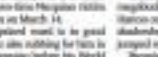
A guaranteed prize of P100,000 awaits the champion.

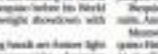
Among the leading competitors are Mayor Dennis Pineda, Pinoy Time, Fractured Finger, Aber this Day, Mayor Roy Pangandian, GB Carretero, Henry Capandrino, Rodrigo Duran, 8th disk Prima, Mayor Bobby Dunca, Ador Phelps and Danny Soriano.

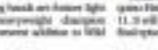


RACING tips

By Top Choice
At San Lazaro LP







PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2009

A-Red undergoes hip surgery

DARYL R. CHICA—TANDEZ'S TWO-TRACK MIND ALIGNED TO RO-driguez' last offseason stint: surgery on his right hip on Monday and was projected to return to the team's lineup in six to nine weeks. GM Brian Cashman expects the three-time AL MVP back on the field "sometime in May." Rodriguez will need a more extensive operation after the season, doctors said.

Editor Tedoro S. Malasdino • Assistant Editor Francis T. Gloria

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HOTSHOTS PBA FIESTA CUP

L.A. CAR ACCESSORIES, TINT & SOUND DOOR

SURGER King's Arwind Santos shoots over San Miguel import Gabe Freeman in Sunday's game won by the Beermen, 114-108. ARIES TORIO

TNT tries to get back in business

By Mayong B. Castillo

THE CHAMPIONSHIP HANGOVER SHOULD BE GONE BY NOW, whether Talk 'N Text likes it or not.

Winless in their first two games in the Moretlite 39th Fiesta Cup, the Tropang Texters need to huddle down to work on their shots for their first win against the Coca-Cola Tigers at 4:30 p.m. at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Juxtaposing for playoff positions will start earlier in this tournament considering its shorter format, where each team will have just 11 games in play to the eliminations round.

Interestingly, the only other winless team in the 20-squad field is Alaska, the runner-up to the Texters in the Philippine Cup. The Aces are also 0-2.

"I expected to lose our first game, because we weren't ready," coach Chot Reyes said. "Tomorrow (today), we expect to play a lot better against Coca-Cola."

Reyes and the Texters fell to Purefoods, 111-121, and worry saw the lone rotating since the club was fresh off its Philippine Cup championship celebration three weeks earlier.

In their second game, the Texters showed some of the character that gave them that crown, only to fall short in the flying minutes against Sta. Lucia, 106-100, in a road game in Pangasinan days later.

"We have to be aggressive in attacking the zone," Coca-Cola coach Jeffersonh Domondon said of Talk 'N Text. "We have to stop the cunning game of Talk 'N Text and limit their second-chance points."

The Tigers, meanwhile, shoot for a follow-up of that win later in the night when they battle Barangay Ginebra in the 7:30 p.m. game as the defending champion Gin Kings play their third match in seven days.

Ginebra opened its title defense with upheaval behind Rod Brodd's 42 points, 23 rebounds and nine assists in a 120-103 win over the Tigers on March 4, before falling prey to the Burger King Titans two days later.

"We have to make adjustment and just bounce back," Ginebra's Joeg Dickies said.

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GO JOSEPH

Go stuns Peping's POC allies, hits Joseph

By Jana Mesarvo

ALREADY LOCKED IN A BITTER DISpute with the government sports agency PSC, the Philippine Olympic Committee was rocked yesterday by an unexpected implosion.

Jeffrey-ited Go Teng Kok launched a verbal attack on deposed secretary general and swimming head Mark Joseph, throwing off the allies of POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. and further splintering the sorry of affairs in the Olympic body.

Go, the special assistant to Cojuangco, described the P20-million disbursement the Philippine Amateur Swimming Association received from the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. as "highly irregular" and "grossly unfair" to the other national sports associations.

The Pasa reportedly drew the P20 million from direct financial assistance from Pagcor for the accelerated projects from December 2008 to December 2008.

Pagcor officials said the agency's cash aid to Pasa was approved by then Philippine Sports Commission chair William "Butch" Ramirez in a memorandum.

"How could Pagcor give (P20 million to one NSA when there are 11 other NSAs scrounging for funds to bankroll their programs?" said Go, who led the POC troops in negotiations with the organizers of the Cara Southeast Asian Games.

"It's grossly unfair to the other NSAs."

After his diatribe against Joseph, the president of Philippine Amateur Track and Field moved to severe his ties with Cojuangco's group, according to sources close to Go.

The same sources said they expect Go to build closer ties this time with PSC chair Harry Angping.

Go and Joseph are both members of Cojuangco's "kitchen cabinet" and were credited with helping Cojuangco defeat shooting chief Art Marcaida in the POC election last November.

When Angping unseated the POC chief nearly two months ago, he stopped Pasa's direct funding from Pagcor.

"At first, I was envious," said Go. "Then, I was jealous, but now I'm angry."

Joseph could not be reached for comment. He left for Kuwait yesterday to join Cojuangco in a gathering with top officials of the Olympic Council of Asia.

Aplus METRO Editor Alexander S. Lilunday

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'Shabu' sold openly in 'sari-sari' store

PDEA asset says drug sales high in barangay in Taguig City

By Tarra V. Quismundo

IN A SARI-SARI STORE IN TAGUIG CITY, Marlboro does not refer to a brand of cigarette, it means a sachet of "shabu."

A longtime asset of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) said this was what he found out while he was conducting surveillance operations in Barangay Tuktuk, an area known as a source of methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu for small-time drug users.

"You just say Marlboro and the [storekeeper] will automatically give you shabu. That's their password," he told the Inquirer on Monday night.

"They put it in a cigarette pack and when I looked at it, it's shabu. It's what's inside, it's shabu. It's sold at P650," said the informant who lives in Taguig.

He asked for anonymity, saying he had to protect his identity for him to be effective as an asset.

He had previously worked with PDEA, being among the undercover agents who monitored the operations of the Pasig shabu lounge which was dismantled in February 2006.

Previous operations

He was also involved in the seizure in July 2007 of Fernando, Allan Carlos and Alberto—all nicknamed Tinga—alleged drug pushers who claimed they were related to Taguig Mayor Freddie Tinga.

This was denied, however, by the mayor himself.

"Madalas ang [sic] Mayor ang bumibili—mga Acra, mga mamahaling [Ladies are] high. There are a lot of people buying—children and the elderly[,]," the asset said.

The fact that shabu was now being sold in a sari-sari store indicated the resolve of local authorities to clear the city of drugs, said a ranking PDEA official involved in planning and executing operations.

Ranked first

The official, who also asked for anonymity for his sensitive role in satisfying operations, said Taguig City, home to the National Capital Region Police Office, ranked first among all the cities in Metro Manila in terms of drug activities.

"Right now, drug trafficking is at all rampant. If local officials in the area are sincere in cleaning their surroundings, they can achieve a drug free community. But we do not see the cooperation," he said.

"If the local government [officials] [tell us], there will be no shabu," he added.

The asset described the city as a haven for untouchables as local authorities would not dare apprehend drug suspects who claim to be related to local officials.

No direct link

This was true in the case of Fernando, Allan Carlos and Alberto Tinga, who reportedly openly sold drugs in the area, the quickly clarified, however, that the agency had no evidence directly linking the mayor to drug operations.

The PDEA is monitoring other places around the country for rampant drug trade and the possible involvement of local officials, from barangay officers to congressmen, in the illegal activity.

This was after the agency warned that drug money might be used in the 2010 elections.

The Department of Interior and Local Government has also activated a legal team to check the possible liability of local executives in areas where drug use and sales have become common.

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SHARK BODY fit

Mall owner has until today to vacate premises

THE MANAGEMENT OF EMIX GOTESCO Grand Central SkyDiao only until today to execute the establishment to open the way for its takeover by the Caloocan City government.

Based on the writ of possession issued by acting Judge Oscar Bautista of the Caloocan Perpetual Trial Court Branch 126, the mall administration must leave the premises within three days—a deadline which started on Monday.

Mayor Recto Echevarri yesterday distributed their takeover of the mall, saying they merely wanted to enforce the city government's right over the property after Gotesco Investments Inc. (GII) failed to pay 33 years' worth of real property taxes amounting to P722.3 million.

"This is a simple issue. What we did was no different from what a bank would do if one of its customers failed to pay his mortgage. The bank would take over the property. This is what we did," he said.

At the same time, he assured mall owners that they would be allowed to retain their business spaces as soon as they sign a contract with the city government.

Echevarri added that about half of the tenants have already signed letters of intent on renewing their contracts.

"We want to check fit to who among them are serious about signing a contract with us and then we will discuss the contract as soon as the three-day writ of possession becomes final on Thursday," he said.

According to the mayor, the city government will not increase the rental rates for mall owners.

The mall administration, meanwhile, said in a statement sent to the Inquirer that it was business as usual despite the court order.

"[We] wish to inform our patrons, clientele, staff and the general public that the mall is still open for business. Contrary to rumor mongers reports, the mall is still being operated by the Ever Gotesco Group pending the resolution of legal matters," it said.

The statement added, "This matter is [being] handled accordingly by our legal departments and we're still waiting pending resolution on two outstanding orders issued by co-equal courts."

The mall administration noted that in November 2008, the city government had requested its intention to take over the mall. This prompted GII to file a case at the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 11 the following month.

On Dec. 24, the court issued an order stopping the Caloocan City government from taking over and closing the mall. Local officials later filed a motion for reconsideration which was denied, according to the statement.

On Jan. 16, the city government filed a petition for the issuance of a writ of possession at the Caloocan RTC. The case went to the table of Bautista who granted the motion.

"Thus, what the Manila RTC Manila has enjoined or prevented, judge Bautista or court, a co-equal court, has allowed," the statement read.

Report by T. Battefeld

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT FOR NGOs & FOUNDATIONS SEMINAR. March 25, 2009 (8 am-5pm) Richville Hotel, 286 EDSA, Mandaluyong City. Topics: Principles, processes, planning & budgeting; Financial statements & analyses; Cross management & cost cutting strategies; Best practices, tips, trends, & techniques; Accounting side: Internal controls, monitoring, reporting, documentation; Statement preparation & auditing. Speakers: EMMANUEL AMIGAN, DIMMUEL AMIGAN & CO. CPAs & PHILIPPINE INSTITUTE OF CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS. Get Early Bird Discount (deadline: March 10, 2009). Contact: TXCP: 321-8288, 388-7524; 321-0266; 0918-2298777, 0919-2298783. Email address: triton@getnet.net or ftcp_ph@yahoo.com. Limited seats only. Register Now!

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Parts of PNP autopsy report falsified–CHR

By Alexis Pupa

PARTS OF THE AUTOPSY REport on the three victims of the Feb. 17 alleged police ambush in Pilar in Quezon City were falsified, the Commission on Human Rights said yesterday.

CHR chair Leila de Lima said this means there's a question on the validity of the whole report.

In a press conference yesterday, De Lima said their forensic consultant Dr. Raquel Fortun of the University of the Philippines College of Medicine, reported that the Philippine National Police medico-legal report signed by Dr. Paul Ed Orais of the Quezon City Police District Crime Lab followed the weight for the major organs of the victims, including the heart, kidneys, liver and spleen.

But when she examined the bodies, Fortun was surprised to find that the organs were still intact. She explained that part of the procedure in an autopsy requires the examining officer to take out the organs and weigh them. Fortun added that it was not possible to weigh the organs without severing them from the body.

"This is nonsensical to take1 cocaine of the reports ... The organs were not taken out. Then the autopsy is not complete. The organs are still in place," Fortun said.

De Lima said that while the issue does not directly relate to larger issue of whether the Feb. 17 incident is a shootout or a rubout, she said the issue of the organs is vital.

"It (medico-legal report) would appear to have been falsified. It would affect the integrity of the whole document ... What happened was a sloppy autopsy ... A preceding person. (that should not be allowed)," she said.

Cops' team leader laments media reports on Edsa encounter, asks for equal rights

By Nancy Carvajal

INDICTMENT IDEAS FOR THE five men acquitted by the court of the Feb.17 encounter resulted in Quezon City between policemen and suspected carjackers, the police team leader asked for equal rights.

"We also have rights," Insp. Angelo Nicolas, Quezon City Police District antiterrorism unit head said a press conference at the headquarters of the Public Attorney's Office in Quezon City yesterday morning.

Nicolas, 31, accused that the encounters were 'fake' which resulted in the deaths of three suspected carjackers was a legitimate operation.

He lamented that they have already been vilified by the public for doing their job. "We didn't do anything wrong, we didn't violate any law," he said.

Nicolas said his suspension and that of his men had demoralized other policemen.

In the same press conference, Public Attorneys Office chief Acmida Rueda-Acosta announced they had filed a joint motion for reconsideration with urgent motion to intermittently lift the preventive suspension and dismiss the case before the National Police Commission.

Acosta also said the policemen will only submit themselves to the Regalado investigation.

"We are submitting only to the jurisdiction of the Napolcom. Under civil service rules, Napolcom has the primary jurisdiction," Acosta noted.

Alternatively, Quezon City Vice Mayor Herbert Bautista pressured the police to cooperate to prejudge the suspended cops involved in the Edsa shootout, saying the policemen still enjoy a presumption of innocence.

"I believe the majority of residents, particularly those who were victims of crime, understand and appreciate the effort and sacrifices of our cops. It is best to remember that we are policemen also have a presumption of innocence under the law," he said. With a report by Aella M. Aurelio

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
Bureau of Customs
Manila 1099

CUSTOMS MEMORANDUM ORDER
NO. 20-2009

SUBJECT : Amendments to CMO No. 36-2008 and Guidelines for the Implementation of the Authorized Economic Operator Program for Transit Goods Consigned to Locators of Clark and Subic Bay Freeport Zones Discharged at Ports and Airports with Operating eJan Customs System

1. Objectives

To improve certain provisions of CMO 36-2008 taking into consideration difficulties encountered by Freeport Zone Locators during the initial implementation of E-JACCS and to provide guidelines towards facilitating Freeport Zone locators' compliance with administrative and documentary requirements for the release and transfer of transit cargoes from the ports/airports of discharge to their Freeport Zone destinations.

2. Scope

The coverage of this Order shall be the same as the coverage in CMO No. 36-2008.

3. General Provisions

This Order shall, in general, adhere to the General Provisions of CMO No. 36-2008 subject to the following amendments and additional provisions:

3.1 Additional Transportation Guaranty Bond (Part III, General Provisions, Section 1.2.1)

Until such time that, 3 months, date or specific time as may be available as basis for the CTSB, for the purpose of enabling Clark and Subic Bay Freeport Zone locators to immediately benefit from significant reduction in cost of transferring transit cargoes from the ports/ airports of discharge to their Freeport Zone locations, determination of the amount of ATBGs shall initially be facilitated as follows:

3.1.1 Freeport Zone locator shall establish the total FOB value of all transit goods discharged in a port or airport during the immediately preceding three months, based on the Import Entry and Internal Revenue Declarations (IEIRD) filed by the Freeport Zone Authorities;

3.1.2 Freeport Zone locator shall calculate the amount of its CTSB in a port or airport using the formula indicated below, provided that a CTSB should be at least One-Half Billion Pesos (P 0.5 B), provided further that the Collector of Customs may adjust the amount of the bond as provided for in Item 1.2.1 of CMO 36-2008.

Total FOB Value of
3 days x 0.146 = 0.4384% Transit Goods
Number of days during the immediately preceding three months

Note: The factor 0.146 is the ratio of Total Taxes and Duties Collected by the BOC to the Total FOB Value of All Imports, per Import Entry Reports in 2008.)

3.1.3 Freeport Zone locator shall execute an affidavit attesting to the completeness and accuracy of the (a) FOB values of transit goods during the immediately preceding 3 months, (b) Total FOB Value and (c) Total Taxes and Duties due on the transit goods in a port or airport of discharge. The Freeport Zone locator shall submit the affidavit to the Freeport Zone Authority which, after verification of the accuracy of the declared amount of FOB, shall endorse the same to the BOC Revenue Department in the port or airport of discharge.

3.1.4 Freeport Zone locator shall secure its CTSB from any BOC-accredited insurance company in the port or airport of discharge and register it with the BOC Revenue Department on said port/airport.

3.1.5 After 30 June 2009, a recalculation of the actual duties and taxes on all transits pursuant to CMO 36-2008 shall be made. If the CTSB that has been posted is less than the CTSB following this recalculation, the Collector shall require the posting of additional CTSB.

3.1.6 In general, the existence of a CTSB in lieu with the Customs port would be sufficient compliance with the bonding requirement under this Order even if the duties and taxes due on the transit goods are paid at another Bay Freeport Zone. Provided, that the District Collector, or the Deputy Collector for Operations in the latter's duly authorized representative shall require that a high-risk or high-valued shipment that is not sufficiently covered by the CTSB shall be subject to additional bond posting in the form of CTSB following this recalculation. The Collector shall require the posting of additional CTSB.

3.1.7 In general, the existence of a CTSB in lieu with the Customs port would be sufficient compliance with the bonding requirement under this Order even if the duties and taxes due on the transit goods are paid at another Bay Freeport Zone. Provided, that the District Collector, or the Deputy Collector for Operations in the latter's duly authorized representative shall require that a high-risk or high-valued shipment that is not sufficiently covered by the CTSB shall be subject to additional bond posting in the form of CTSB following this recalculation. The Collector shall require the posting of an increase of the CTSB (in accordance with Section 1.2.3 of CMO 36-2008) or be detained under Customs custody.

3.2. Pre-Payment Accounts for the Payment of the BOC Cargo Transfer Fee (Part III, General Provisions, Section 1):

Freeport Zone locators shall pay the BOC Cargo Transfer Fees component of Transit Service Fee and the Import Processing Fees for their transit goods by debit from Pre-Payment Accounts they have established in the Authorized Banks of the BOC in the jurisdictions of the ports/airports of discharge. Locators shall maintain sufficient amounts against which the BOC Cargo Transfer Fees of their client importers shall be debited.

3.3. The Deputy Collector for Operations of the port shall designate alternate BOC officers and employees to perform the processing and approving the transit documents to ensure that the process flow is uninterrupted.

3.4. It shall be the responsibility of the Deputy Collector for Operations to ensure that the Entry Processing Unit of the District Office is provided the complete list of transit bonds/ CTSB.

4. Operational Provisions

This Order shall, in general, adhere to the Operational Provisions of CMO No. 36-2008 for Ports where the Electronic Clearance is automated. For ports where Manifest Clearance is not automated, the following shall be observed in addition:

4.1 Manifest Module/IS Processing (Part V, Operational Provisions, Section 4.a):

In ports and airports where the BOC Entry Processing Unit (EPU) is in the same building as the CPCC, Customs Brokers shall undertake Manifest Clearance in the EPU prior to submission of the Admission Permits and Transit Declaration applications to CPCC. In ports and airports where the EPU is not physically located in the same building as the Transit Facility, Manifest clearance shall be undertaken in the course of the release of the transit goods at the Entry Processing Unit or the Customs Transit Facility. After Customs Officers shall verify the (a) Customs Transit Facility Seals and/or Container Seals, (b) the Cargo Manifest and (c) the Customs Transit Declaration, the transit goods shall be released by the EPU or the Transit Facility.

Where discrepancies are observed between the particulars of the Transit Declaration and the Manifest (e.g., quantity of goods, weight, measurements, description, etc.), the transit goods shall be detained by the Customs Transit Collector in charge of the Customs Transit Facility where manifest clearance is being done or by the Deputy Collector for Operations when manifest clearance is performed at the EPU or the district office for appropriate action.

4.2. Copy of the Transit Declaration to be Used in Verifying Consistency of Details of the Transit Cargoes with Particulars Transit Declaration (Part V, Operational Provisions, Section 4.2, Amendments to the first subparagraph):

The Customs Transit Declaration or the Import Entry Declaration of the transit cargoes (Land Customs Freight Station (CY-CFS), using the Generic Copy of the Transit Declaration shall check the number of packages and weight and markings on the packages of loose transit cargoes and crosscheck them with those noted in the quantities of the Transit Declaration.

4.3. For goods that will not be carried on board closed vans or similar transport units that can be secured by a customs seal, the packages shall be sealed in such a way that any tampering of the packages can easily be detected.

5. Repealing Clause

All BOC rules and regulations inconsistent with this Order are hereby considered repealed, superseded or modified accordingly.

6. Effectivity

This Order shall take effect immediately.

ENJOYING THE TIME
Residents bring beside a creek in Quezon City enjoy a life during summer, apparently unmindful of the danger of flashfloods that rains may bring once the warm months are over.

LTO director ambushed; now in stable condition

By Nancy C. Carvajal

THE FIGHT FOR THE TOP POST AT the Land Transportation Office-National Capital Region could be one of the deadliest for the city as six out of its officials in Quezon City yesterday morning.

Supt. Franklin Makoto Mallorang, head of the Quezon City Police District's Criminal Investigation and Detective Unit, said LTO-NCR Assistant Regional Director Camilo Guanlao, 61, was wounded when three men fired on his vehicle on Doña Juliana Street in Doña Carmen Subdivision, North Fairview, at around 8:30 a.m.

He was later reported to be in stable condition hours after the ambush.

"We gathered from his wife that the victim has been receiving threats since it became known that he was up for promotion as NCR chief for LTO," Mallorang said.

He clarified, however, that right now, they have not identified any LTO employee as a suspect.

Mallorang said Guanlao was in his government-issued van on his way to work when the attack occurred just a few meters away from his house.

The victim sustained three gunshot wounds while his driver was unharmed.

Guanlao's attackers were described as men in their 20s and armed with cal. .45 pistols.

Woman in alleged kidnap try of actress' daughter charged

By Julie M. Aurelio

CHARGES WERE FILED AGAINST A woman who allegedly pretended to be a friend of actress Claudine Barretto to lure Barretto's daughter from school in Quezon City.

In a complaint filed by the National Bureau of Investigation, Jeanne Garcia was charged with intent abduction instead of attempted kidnapping due to lack of evidence.

The Quezon City Prosecutor's Office, through Assistant City Prosecutor Vicente Victoria Grace Villanueva, recommended bail of P2,000 for the woman's temporary liberty.

The NBI arrested Garcia on Friday night near the Robinson's Xpressway Stores Inc. in Libis, Quezon City after the arrest filed a complaint at the NBI.

In their affidavit, Claudine and her husband Raymart Santiago alleged that a certain "Rosalina Reyes" called the school of their daughter, Inifinia, and tried to convince the girl's "yaya," Merly Bravo, that Reyes was a classmate of Barretto's.

"Reyes" claimed that she recently came from the United States and that she has gifts from Barretto's fans which "Reyes" wished to give to Barretto, with Infinia tagging along.

The "yaya," however, refused and referred the woman to Barretto's secretary, Lerilyn Caparros, who said in a separate affidavit that she did not know "Reyes."

The celebrity couple said they were so alarmed that Barretto "immediately rushed in Infinia's school to personally pick her up for fear of a possible abduction of her daughter."

"Reyes" allegedly called Caparros the following day to ask for personal information about the Santiagos, claiming that she was a close friend of the couple and that they belonged on the same church.

PDI ad deskperson needs your help

INQUIRER'S ADVERTISING DESKperson Regina dela Paz is facing the biggest battle of her life. She is afflicted with non-Hodgkins lymphoma, a rare diverse group of hematologic cancers which grow between her colon and small intestines.

"My attending physician says chemotherapy may relay a tumor which normally grows to joints and tendons would be found on the lining of my stomach," De la Paz said.

A mother of a one-year-old baby boy, Gina is set to undergo six therapy sessions in the next five to six months. She's appealing for financial help.

Dr. la Paz can be reached at 09189051926 or (049) 4280663/531. Her bank account number (with PS-Bank-Cities Homes Avenue branch) is 3333-13003342.

Genalaga B. Alcantara

METROBRIEFS

Escapee recaptured

AN INMATE at the Manila City Jail accused of murder escaped from detention yesterday morning after attending a hearing at city hall. But Jayson Tagle, 33, was recaptured almost six hours later in Bagalangit, Tondo, by members of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology. Tagle reportedly sweated past the jail guards while he and other detainees were boarding the bus back to jail at around 11 a.m. He then boarded a motorcycle to escape.

Jeannette I. Andrade

Band guitarist slain

A BAND guitarist died in an alleged gunfight with a police officer after they had an argument Tuesday morning in Pasig City. The victim was identified as Jonathan Reyala, 19 , a resident of Catacuman City, who was shot on both thighs, by Senior Insp. Rommel Tagaro, in a report to the Pasig Police Station said. But it was not immediately clear if Reyala's death was caused by the bullets or if he had suffered a head attack after being shot. Police said the incident occurred at 9:30 p.m. on Jasmine Street in Pinagsama Village, Barangka matapos umano. Orly Ilagan, 28, allegedly got into an argument with Calpe.

EJ Tay

World Kidney Day

THE PHILIPPINE Society of Nephrology will spearhead the country's observance of World Kidney Day on March 12. The event will be kicked off by a motorcade starting from the National Kidney and Transplant Institute on East Avenue and ending at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center on North Avenue where a program and will be held to raise information on how the public can prevent having a kidney disease. For information about the different activities in your area, please send an e-mail to kidney_world@

yahoo.com.

Lapuz; 81

RETIRED Makati Judge Romulo J. Lapuz died on March 9 at age 81. He is survived by wife Remedios, children Ma. Luisa, Ferdinand, Rosalind and Ma. Teresa, in-laws Tahlia and Cesar and grandchildren. His remains lie at the presidential suite in Loyola Memorial Chapels in Guadalupe, Makati. He will be buried on Saturday. 8 a.m., at the family mausoleum in La Loma.

Children of older fathers have lower IQ, study finds

THE CHILDREN OF OLDER fathers scored lower than the offspring of younger fathers on IQ tests and a range of other cognitive measures at 8 months old, 4 years old and 7 years old, according to a study released on Monday that added to a growing body of evidence suggesting risks to overpassing fatherhood.

The study is the first to show that the children of older fathers do not perform as well on cognitive tests at young ages. Although the differences in scores were slight and usually off by just a few points on average, the study's authors called the findings "unexpectedly startling."

"The older the dads were, the slightly worse the children were doing," said Marcia J. McCamb, the paper's senior author and a professor of psychiatry at the Queensland Brain Institute in Brisbane, Australia. "The findings fit in a straight line, suggesting there may be some steady form of mismatching happening in the dad's genetics."

Earlier studies have found a higher incidence of schizophrenia and autism among the offspring of men who went to their mid-to-late 40s or older when they had children. A study published in 2005 found that 45-year-olds and 17-year-olds with old, at fathers scored lower on conventional IQ tests, as did the offspring of teenage fathers.

The new study published on Monday in the online journal PLoS Medicine, emanated data to from the federally sponsored Collaborative Perinatal Project, which gathered information from more than 50,000 pregnant women around 12 universities in the United States from 1959 to 1963.

The researchers analyzed the scores of 33,027 children who, as part of the project, had been tested at regular intervals in a variety of cognitive skills, including thinking and reasoning, memorization, memory, understanding, speaking and reading, as well as motor skills. Fathers in the study were age 14 to 66, while mothers were 12 to 46.

Regardless of their mothers' ages, children whose fathers were 30 years old had lower scores on all tests, except those assessing physical coordination, than those whose fathers were 20, the researchers found.

And the older the fathers, the more likely the children were to have lower scores, they found.

By contrast, children with older mothers generally performed higher on the cognitive measures, a finding in line with most other studies, suggesting that these children may benefit from the more nurturing home environments associated with the generally higher income and education levels of older mothers, researchers said. AFP

Obama rebukes Bush, vows not to allow politics to taint science

OBAMA

BUSH

WASHINGTON—IN A CLEAR rebuke to his White House predecessor, President Barack Obama declared he would root out any politics in their science and signed an executive order to allow backing of broader research into stem cells.

In yesterday's ground-breaking Monday Obama also said he would end "manipulation or coercion" of the scientific community when its findings are "inconvenient."

Scientists hope to use embryonic stem cells to regenerate diseased cells in those suffering from Parkinson's disease, diabetes, Alzheimer's disease, cancer and other debilitating diseases. Former President George W. Bush had limited the use of taxpayer money allowed for the research, saying it required the destruction of embryos and is therefore morally wrong.

Shooting scenes in a White House symposium, Obama compared the stem cell directive with a presidential memorandum to prohibit what he called "the misuse of scientific integrity in government decision-making."

Bush was ahead of the scientific community by often dismissing its findings as morally disturbing and stem cell research because they contradicted his conservative political and moral positions.

Obama said that government was over.

"Promoting science isn't just about providing resources—it's also about protecting free and open inquiry," he said. "It's about letting scientists like those who are here today do their jobs, free from manipulation or coercion, and listening to what they tell us, even when it's inconvenient—especially when it's inconvenient.

"It is about ensuring that scientific data is never distorted or concealed to serve a political agenda—and that we make scientific decisions based on facts, not ideology."

The president said his decision to allow federal funding of far broader stem cell research would open the road for promising, but still long-range research.

"Medical miracles do not happen simply by accident," he said before signing the order. "They result from painstaking and costly research from years of timely trial and error, rounds of which never bear fruit and from a government willing to support that work."

Researchers said the new president's message was clear: Science, which once propelled men to the moon, again matters in American life. Opponents saw a differently: a defeat for morality in the most basic questions of life and death.

On another issue relating to the Bush administration, Obama ordered a review of his predecessor's use of presidential signing statements, which often told government officials how to implement laws passed by Congress.

Gibbs said Obama has used memos in federal agencies directing them to review Bush's signing statements, which he often used to direct officials to ignore parts of laws he thought were incorrect or restricted his constitutional powers.

Bush used the statements to circumvent Congress' laws on torture and prohibitions against using federal tax dollars to build a permanent military base in Iraq.

Gibbs said presidents have used such statements throughout history to note potential problems and Obama planned to continue that practice for. Gibbs said, Obama would not use signing statements to disregard overall Congressional laws.

The stem cell order, meanwhile, could set in motion a significant push on research in fetal tissue treatment for illnesses from diabetes to paralysis. Proponents such as former first lady Nancy Reagan and the late actor Christopher Reeve had called for ending restrictions on research spending.

Obama called on Congress to provide the needed funding even as he insisted the order would affect only federal spending.

"We will ensure that our government never spans the door to the use of cloning for human reproduction," he said. "It is dangerous, profoundly wrong, and has no place in our society, or any society."

Bush had limited the use of taxpayer money in research using 21 stem cell lines that were created before Aug. 9, 2001, the day he announced his decision. While the Obama order reverses this, it does not address an earlier legislative ban that remains in place prohibiting federal spending on researchers who develop stem cell lines by destroying embryos.

That legislation, however, does not prevent federal funding going to research on stem cell lines that were produced by researchers who did their work without federal aid. AP

WORLDBRIEFS

28 killed in Iraq bombing

BAGHDAD—The Iraqi military says at least 28 people have been killed and 25 wounded in a suicide bombing targeting Shiite Muslims west of Baghdad. It is the latest attack in a spike of violence that also claimed the lives of 30 military troops downing down for the last. The military spokesperson's office says the bomber detonated an explosive vest on Tuesday as the tribal leaders were touring the market in the town of Abu Ghraib. AP

Sri Lanka bombing kills 15

COLOMBO—A suspected Tamil Tiger suicide bomber killed 15 people and injured two government ministers in Sri Lanka on Tuesday as troops fought to quash a decades-long rebellion by the guerrilla force. The attack, which targeted politicians attending a function at a mosque in the southern town of Monnesa, came as the Tigers appeared close to defeat as the battle for government-held territory shifted to fierce fighting. About 20 people, including Postal Services Minister Mahinda Wijesekera and Cultural Minister Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena, were wounded in the suicide attack, with Wijesekera reportedly fighting for his life in a coma hospital. AFP

Another sodomy trial of Anwar

KUALA LUMPUR—Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim will go on trial for sodomy in July, Malaysia's high court said on Tuesday, overruling the politician's claim of a set-getting a fair hearing. High Court Judge Mohamad Zabidin Mohamad Diah scheduled hearings for July 1-31 and said a separate affair Anwar pleaded innocent to August 2008 to a charge of sodomizing a 23-year-old male former aide. Anwar insists the charge was concocted to stem the opposition's momentum after it achieved its best showing at the polls in national polls one year ago. The government has dismissed Anwar's claims of a political conspiracy. AP

16 crew of cargo vessel missing

TOKYO—Japanese rescue vessels and aircraft scoured the sea Tuesday looking for 16 sailors who are missing after a collision which coast guard officials say probably sank their South Korean freighter. The Coast Guard said the Panamanian-flagged cargo vessel the Cygnus Ace is now 60 miles off the Okinawa Island, about 1,720 km south of Tokyo, during the early hours of Tuesday. Seven South Korean and nine Indonesian sailors on board the 60,000 ton ship remain, Japan's Coast Guard said. The accident happened at night and amid low visibility as rains and strong winds battered the ships, the coast guard said. AFP

Bolivia expels US diplomat

LA PAZ—President Evo Morales on Monday ordered a US diplomat to leave Bolivia for allegedly conspiring with opposition groups, further straining tense relations six months after he expelled the American ambassador. The ultra-leader said investigations determined that the US Embassy's second secretary, Francisco Martinez, "was in permanent contact with opposition groups." The US State Department called the Bolivian move "unwarranted and unjustified." "We reject the allegations," it said in a statement in Washington. AP

European CB chief sees signs a turning point may be near

NEW YORK—TOP US ECONOMIC officials pressed for global coordination to battle the financial crisis on Monday and the president of the European central bank said there were signs the world economy may be near a turning point, but stock investors remained cool to signs of hope.

As the G20 finance ministers met in London next month, White House economic advisers said more countries need to lower interest rates and step up spending to pull the world out of recession.

But global stock markets dipped to a mid 14-year lows, and the Dow Jones Industrial Average extended its last month's negative trajectory, falling 1.2 percent. The Nasdaq lost 2 percent.

After economic gloom spread from Asia to Japan recorded its largest current account deficit, billionaire investor Warren Buffett said at the beginning of the US trading day that the US economy had "fallen off a cliff" and warned of the risk that inflation will accompany any rebound.

A $40-billion deal by Merrill & Co. Inc. to take over faltering Plough Corp. failed to spark a rally in the broader market.

European Central Bank President Jean-Claude Trichet said financial markets are underestimating the potential for a recovery and said big bankers seem seeing signs of a turning point.

"We are identifying a number of elements in the global economy ... that are reassuring," Trichet said.

Trichet, who shunned calls for the global economy to be flush by low interest rates, forecasts moving to fund, cut the fall in commodity and oil prices, budget stimulus packages and consumption not to let Angie Gurrant institutions fail.

The European Union was set to look calls to double the International Monetary Fund's arsenal to $500 billion to fight the financial crisis.

An EU draft document obtained by Reuters, which was on track to be approved by EU ministers on Tuesday said: "It is essential that the IMF has appropriate financial means to assist countries affected by the global financial crisis." The United States recommended to promote a global stimulus.

US President Barack Obama's National Economic Council Director Larry Summers and Council of Economic Advisers Chair Christina Romer both suggested the US administration wants all industrialized nations to pull together to find a coordinated response.

Summers said stimulating demand should be the focus of the G20 group of rich and developing nations, whose finance ministers will meet the week ahead of the April summit.

"The right macroeconomic focus for the G20 is on global demand and the world needs more global demand," Summers said in an interview with the Financial Times.

Romer said the size of global recovery would depend on how many countries lower interest rates and step up spending, and added: "In this regard, the aggressive US action in US interest rate reductions in January is important and the UK announced last week were welcome news. They are paving the way for a worldwide end to this worldwide recession."

But Romer also said it was too early to consider whether the US economy needed another stimulus package or more after a $787 billion package was approved. "We need to let the medicine work for a while," she said.

Worries about the bigger economic picture weighed on what in ordinary times would be enthusiasm for the marriage of Merck and Schering-Plough. Reuters

Study: Belligerent chimp proves animals do plan

STOCKHOLM—A CHIMP CHOREOGRAPHER who ruthlessly ordered a coach of sticks and then hurled stones at zoo visitors in fits of rage has confirmed for many what is often absent just like humans, a Swedish study said.

Santino the chimpanzee's antisocial behavior stunned both visitors and keepers at the Furuvik Zoo but fascinated researchers because it was so carefully premeditated.

According to Monday's report in the journal Current Biology, the 33-year-old alpha male started building his weapons cache in the morning before the zoo opened, collecting rocks and loosening poor slabs from concrete boulders inside his enclosure. He ventured small around midday before he unleashed a "barbarity" of rocks against visitors, the study said.

"These observations convincingly show that our fellow apes do consider the future to a very complex way," said the author of the report, Lund University Ph.D. student Mathias Osvath. "It implies that they have a highly developed consciousness, including flexible mental simulation of potential events."

Osvath's findings were based on his own observations of Santino and interviews with three senior caretakers who had followed the chimpanzee's behavior for 13 years at the zoo in Furuvik, about 150 km north of Stockholm.

Seemingly at ease with his position as leader of the group, Santino didn't attack the other chimpanzees, Osvath told The Associated Press. The attacks were only directed at humans viewing the apes across the moat surrounding the island compound where they were held. AP

The EYES centered picture made available on March 9, Santino the stone-throwing chimpanzee at Furuvik Zoo in Sweden. Santino's premeditated behavior stunned both visitors and keepers at the zoo but fascinated researchers. The 33-year-old alpha male built his weapons cache in the morning before the zoo opened. He waited until it opened midday before unleashing a "barbarity" of rocks against visitors. EPA

Zimbabwe PM rules out foul play in car crash

HARARE—ZIMBABWEAN Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai on Monday ruled out foul play as the cause of a car crash that injured him and killed his wife Susan, raising concerns that it would increase tensions in the new government.

Tsvangirai was rear with his gold alongside the enormous pressure of trying to rescue the shattered economy in some early government decisions, Finance Minister Tendai Biti said.

After returning home from treatment for minor injuries in Botswana, Tsvangirai told reporters that despite speculation over the cause of the accident the chance of foul play being involved was very low. "I don't think so," he said.

"It was an accident which unfortunately took a life. I am sure that life has to go on and I'm sure she would have liked for life to go on," he said.

Many Zimbabweans are suspicious about Friday's crash on a remote road in which Susan Tsvangirai died, saying they have grave doubts over the country's economic decline.

The driver of the truck that slammed into Tsvangirai's vehicle and feared it is still off the road appeared at a court in Gweru, 150 km south of Harare, on Monday accompanied by three plainclothes police officers.

Gibsons Mwenda was granted bail and remanded to return to court on March 23. "He's quite distressed, he's got to come to grips with the reality that life was lost," his lawyer, Chris Mhike, told reporters. Reuters

Octuplets mom agrees to outside help for her kids

LOS ANGELES—CALIFORNIA OCTUplets mom agreed to allow a nursing charity to provide more for her eight newborns and six older children for at least six months, US television channel site Dr. Phil McGraw said on Monday.

Under the agreement between Nadya Suleman and the philanthropic foundation Angels in Waiting, she and all 14 of her children will live together in a new home provided by the charity in Southern Los Angeles, a spokesperson for McGraw said.

The nonprofit "initially will be providing around-the-clock services of skilled personal intensive care nurses who specialize in premature infant development and care," a statement from his nationally syndicated TV show, "Dr. Phil," said.

The statement said the services would begin "as soon as the octuplets are released from the hospital and will be reevaluated every six months." Suleman first made headlines Jan. 26 when she gave birth to six boys and two girls, delivering 9 1/2 weeks premature, at the Kaiser Permanente Medical Center in suburban Los Angeles. Only the second known set of octuplets born alive in the United States, they were initially listed in a critical condition.

But Suleman became a lightning rod for public criticism after it was learned that she was a divorced, jobless mother of six living with her parents on government assistance when she became pregnant with octuplets through in vitro fertilization.

The statement said Suleman, who has been living with her six older children, aged 3 to 7, in her mother's three-bedroom house, "had no other suitable home" for her family, and despite it being still help her "prepare the house properly to meet the children's needs." Reuters

The WORLD

Editor Lorraine B. Quiazon

US protests 'harassment' by Chinese vessels

WASHINGTON—CHINESE SHIPS SURROUNDED and harassed a US Navy mapping ship in international waters off China, at one point coming within eight meters of the American boat and strewing debris in its path, the Defense Department said on Monday.

The Chinese administration said it would monitor naval operations in the South China Sea, most of which China considers its territory and protested to China about what it called reckless behavior that endangered lives.

At one point during the incident Sunday the unarmed USNS Impeccable rammed five boats on an approaching Chinese ship in self-defense, the Pentagon said, in another point a Chinese ship played chicken with the American, stopping dead in front of the Impeccable as it tried to sail around, forcing the civilian mariners to slam on the brakes.

"We view these as unprofessional maneuvers" and a violation of international law, Pentagon spokesperson Bryan Whitman said.

The incident had overtones of ugliness, but the US ship is not, strictly speaking, a spy ship. It maps the ocean floor with sonar, compiling information the Navy says can be used to coax submarines or track those of other nations.

The Impeccable was specifically designed to augment the Navy's anti-submarine capability, although military spokespersons would not be specific about the ship's duties when it was surrounded.

A Pentagon accounting of the confrontation documents the actions of the attacked and outraged Americans even as a Chinese vessel came to within 25 feet. Pictures released by the Navy give a sense of the surreal scene: The Chinese mariners had stripped to their underwear following the time by the Impeccable's fire hoses.

Whitman called that "provocative," and said the confrontation was the most aggressive of a series of incidents recently in the area.

Impeccable's crew radioed to tell the Chinese ships that it was leaving the area and requested a safe path to navigate, the Pentagon said.

But two of the Chinese ships stopped directly ahead of the Impeccable, forcing it to an emergency stop, the US account said. The Chinese also dropped pieces of wood in the water to Impeccable's path.

The incident came just a week after China and the US resumed military-to-military consultations following a five-month suspension over US arms sales to Taiwan. And it came as Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi was due in Washington to meet with US officials.

"We're going to continue to operate in the international waters and airs, and we expect the Chinese to observe international law-seemed that," White House spokesman Robert Gibbs said.

A protest was lodged with the Chinese government by the US Embassy in Beijing over the weekend and was repeated in a Pentagon-to-Pentagon attache at a Beijing meeting on Monday.

In Beijing, Chinese officials did not immediately respond to voicemail messages and e-mail regarding the US allegations.

Pentagon officials said the incident followed "increasingly aggressive" acts by Chinese ships against the Impeccable on Wednesday and Saturday and against the USNS Victorious, surveillance ship on Thursday while it operated in the Yellow Sea.

The Chinese ships included a Chinese Navy intelligence collection ship, a Bureau of Maritime Fisheries Patrol Vessel, a State Oceanographic Administration patrol vessel and two small Chinese-flagged vessels, officials said.

China views almost the entirety of the South China Sea as its territory. China's claims to small islets in the region have put it at odds with five governments...the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan.

Pentagon officials said the close encounter followed three other incidents last week:

• On Wednesday, a Chinese Bureau of Fisheries Patrol vessel used a high-intensity spotlight to illuminate the Victorious, an ocean surveillance ship, as it operated in the Yellow Sea, about 535 nautical miles from China's coast, the Pentagon said. The next day, a Chinese F-6 jet flew within surveillance aircraft conducted 12 fly-bys of Victorious at an altitude of about 150 meters and a range of 2,000 meters.

• On Thursday, a Chinese frigate approached USNS Impeccable without warning and crossed its bow at a range of approximately 100 yards, the Pentagon said. This was followed less than two hours later by a Chinese Y-12 aircraft conducting 11 flybys of Impeccable at an altitude of 300 meters and a range from 20 to 50 meters.

• On Saturday, a Chinese intelligence collection ship challenged Impeccable over bridge-to-bridge radio, calling her operations illegal and directing Impeccable to leave the area or "suffer the consequences." AP

Dalai Lama blasts 'brutal crackdown' in Tibet

DHARMSALA, INDIA—CHINA has launched a "brutal crackdown" in Tibet more perverse than the Himalayan region has seen for years, the Dalai Lama said on Tuesday in a speech to mark the 50th anniversary of the failed uprising that sent him into exile.

Tibetan culture and identity are "nearing extinction," he said in this Indian hill town, where the Tibetan spiritual leader and the self-proclaimed government-in-exile have been based since shortly after fleeing their homeland. "The Tibetan people are regarded like criminals, deserving to be put to death."

"These 50 years have brought untold suffering and destruction to the land and people of Tibet," he told about 2,000 people, including Buddhist monks, Tibetan schoolchildren and a handful of foreign supporters. The group gathered to a soundtrack that sequenced the Dalai Lama's home from the town's main temple, and monks blowing enormous conch shells and long brass horns heralded his arrival. "From today Tibetans in Tibet live in enormous fear and the Chinese authorities remain completely unaccountable for them," the Dalai Lama said.

While his comments were unusually strong for a man known for his deeply pacifist beliefs, he also urged that any change come peacefully and reverse much the support for the "Middle Way," which calls for significant Tibetan autonomy under Chinese rule.

"I have no doubt the justice of Tibetan cause will prevail if we continue to tread a path of truth and nonviolence," he said.

While Beijing claims Tibet has been part of Chinese territory for centuries, Tibet was a deeply isolated theocracy until 1951, when Chinese troops invaded. Done, the original caught. Tuesday's anniversary marked March 10, 1959 riots made Tibet against Chinese rule which led to a crackdown and, later that month, the Dalai Lama's dramatic flight across the Himalayas and into exile. AP

BLUE OCEAN STRATEGY DAY
March 12, 2009
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FOR RESERVATIONS, CALL 8132732 - 8132703 AND ASK FOR JULIET OR ELLA

A NEWLY discovered portrait of William Shakespeare is seen in central London on March 9. The portrait has belonged to one family for centuries but was not recognized as a portrait of Shakespeare until recently.

Shakespeare scholars find new portrait of Bard of Avon

LONDON...NEARLY 400 YEARS AFTER HIS death, William Shakespeare appeared in a new and more handsome guise on Monday, thanks to a newly discovered portrait that a group of Shakespeare scholars said art historians said is the only known likeness to have been painted in his lifetime.

Stanley Wells, chair of the Shakespeare Birthday Trust, based in Shakespeare's birthplace of Stratford-on-Avon, described the portrait at a news conference as a "grasp." It shows the Bard as a far more alluring figure than the solemn sheet, bulking image that has been conveyed by engravings, busts and portraits that have been accepted by scholars as the best available image of English literature's most famous figure.

Until now, scholars have deemed the most authentic representation of Shakespeare to be a black-and-white woodcut engraving by the Flemish artist Martin Droeshout that appeared in the first folio edition of Shakespeare's works in 1623, and a marble bust displayed since the 1620s in a Stratford church.

In their place, the scholars in London showed reporters a portrait taken from the private collection of an aristocratic Anglo-Irish family, the Cobbes, who have owned it for nearly 300 years.

But not all Shakespeare scholars are convinced the Cobbe portrait is an authentic likeness, or even that it is of Shakespeare at all, given the conventions of Elizabethan portraiture.

David Scott Kastan, a Yale University Shakespeare expert, said in a telephone interview that there were reasons to doubt whether the richly dressed man in the portrait was Shakespeare, and not an unknown aristocrat.

"If I had to bet, I would say it's not Shakespeare," Kastan said. But even if it was, he said, the traditions of Elizabethan portraiture meant that it would be unwise to conclude that Shakespeare actually looked like the figure depicted in the portrait. "It might be a portrait of Shakespeare, but not a likeness, because the conventions of portraiture at the time were often to idealize the subject," he said.

Experts said the portrait came to light when Alec Cobbe, an art restorer and heir to the family fortune, visited the National Portrait Gallery in London in 2006 to see an exhibition, "Searching for Shakespeare," at which another, familiar Shakespeare portrait was displayed. AFP

Editor Raul D. Morales • Assistant Editor Cecile S. Hartana

BUSINESS

January exports slump 41% to $2.49B

PRIUS COMING TO MANILA
Toyota Motor Philippines is bringing the Prius hybrid car model to the country by the middle of this year. Pricing has not been finalized as there are factors being considered, among them the exchange rates for the yen and the dollar, and possible incentives from the government for the environment-friendly vehicle. (See full story on page B-10.)

Shipments to Japan, United States plummet

By Bunnel W. Dumlao

MERCHANDISE EXPORTS IN JANUARY FELL 41 percent year-on-year to $2.49 billion as shipments of electronic products continued to decline amid the global financial crunch.

According to the National Statistics Office, earnings from electronic goods—which accounted for 54 percent of total exports—plunged 48.4 percent to $1.34 billion last month.

Compared to December earnings, total export revenues in January fell 6.7% percent from $2.68 billion. On the other hand, revenues from electronics increased slightly by 0.6 percent from $1.34 billion.

Receipts from the country's second top export—articles of apparel and clothing accessories, were down 21.6 percent to $134.5 million. This product group accounted for 5.4 percent of total shipments.

Woodcraft and furniture exports posted 3.2 percent of total exports and continued to defy the trend with an increase of 7.5 percent to $79.191 million.

(BALANCE B-4)

(For more stories, turn to Page B-4)

Stocks close lower

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.9 PERCENT lower yesterday on a raft of bad economic news from the United States and a 41-percent plunge in local exports in January, brokers told AFP.

The composite index lost 11.40 points to 1,267.51, while the all-shares index fell 0.7 percent to 1,201.23 points.

A total of 1.68 billion shares valued at P1.27 billion were traded. Decliners led advancers 46 to 31, while 42 issues closed unchanged.

(FINANCE B-5)

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- **Net FDI inflow** down by 48% in '08 /B-5
- **Toyota Prius to hit RP** roads by June 2009 /B-10

DOE sees no oil price hikes soon

By Arny R. Barrie

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (DOE) allayed the public's fears of bigger oil price increases over the next few months in anticipation of another possible output cut by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

Estrella Montecalvo, director of the DOE's oil industry management bureau, clarified that Opec meeting on March 15 would determine the direction of crude oil prices, but "we don't know when will this take effect and at what levels."

Opec, which produces 40 percent of the world's oil, will hold a meeting on Sunday in Mexico.

According to Montecalvo, in the agenda of the meeting was a possible cut over and further protect Opec members' sales and incomes amid declining crude oil prices. As it is, Opec has slashed oil production by 4.2 million barrels a day starting Jan. 1 this year.

In an interview, Montecalvo said Opec plans no further cut production was meant to push falling prices of crude oil up to or south to $75 a barrel.

Crude oil prices have fallen steadily to a little above $40 a barrel to date, after peaking at $147 in July last year.

"It's too early to think, Opec had several attempts to cut production

(BALANCE B-4)

Medusa Mining expansion project on track

By Rizz T. Olchondra

BULLISH ON THE PROSPECTS OF GOLD, Medusa Mining Ltd. of Australia is preceding as scheduled with the expansion of its Co-O gold mine in Surigao del Sur.

"The company is starting to see the benefits of its development and expansion programs," managing director Geoffrey Davis said in the company's performance report for the second half of 2008.

"Being an undedged, high margin gold producer, we are well positioned for an exciting future."

Medusa reported that it was "on schedule to increase its gold production" to 60,000 ounces by the third quarter of 2009 and then to 180,000 ounces come 2010.

Medusa reported an after-tax profit of A$12 million for the second half of 2008. It produced 19,144 ounces of gold, a 179 percent increase from 6,926 ounces in the second half of 2007. It reported a 40 percent increase in Co-O resources to over 1.2 million ounces.

The company also issued 28.2 million fully paid ordinary shares to "institutional and sophisticated investors" on March 5 at an issue price of $1.20. The proceeds of A$24.36 million will be used to boost general working capital and fund tenement drilling at the Co-O mine.

The drilling is designed to increase resources from the current 1.2 million ounces to about 1.5 million ounces.

Underground development aims to increase reserves to 500,000 ounces by the first quarter 2009.

Medusa said it was also building a 16-bed hospital at the Co-O mine site and six new classrooms for the Manobo village serving the mine site. Both are expected to be completed by the middle of the year.

Medusa operates the Co-O gold mine in partnership with local firm Philsaga Mining Corp. The Australian company owns 60 percent of the project while the local partners controls 40 percent.

ONE OF THE BEST SELLING PAPER SHREDDERS IN THE PHILIPPINES

Citi units in RP unfazed by global financial woes

By Doris C. Dumlao

US BANKING GIANT CITIGROUP is confident about growing its retail and wholesale banking businesses in the Philippines despite a lingering global financial turmoil.

In a briefing yesterday, Citi country officer Sergio Veloso also said that the US government's entry into the American bank would not affect its Philippine interests, as these formed part of the core businesses Citi plans to keep.

Veloso added that on the contrary, Citi would continue to take on active role in the local market. He said the country's energy, consumer staples and financial services sectors remained attractive and that Citi would likely be active in various financial advisory and merger and acquisition activities in these areas.

The bank is also seen providing more services to other banks.

Anthony Nappi, head of Citi's global transaction arms for Asia-Pacific, said the bank recognized stiff competition from local banks but he said there were likewise areas where the Citibank could work in partnership with them.

Citi's global transaction services, which account for a sizeable chunk of its business, cover cash management, trade, securities and fund services to publicly to corporations, government and financial institutions.

Citi is the first foreign bank to be accredited to do the promissory solicitation for Philippine Health Insurance Corp. It also recently bagged the sole accreditation to handle the payment for visa applications for the US Embassy and has in turn tapped Banco de Oro Unibank as a collection agent.

"We sell our franchise and when we sell to our clients especially the multinational corporations, we're selling the network and the Philippines is an important part of that network," Nappi said.

Another key part of Citi's strategy in the Philippines over the last 18 years, Nappi noted, was the establishment of "centers of excellence"—business process outsourcing hubs for global operations.

"Whether you talk about financial reporting or credit (review), we continue to expand our outsourcing activities and that's an important part of the strategy moving forward," Nappi said.

Asked how the Philippines was facing compared to other markets, Veloso said the country was somewhere in the "middle of the pack"—considering the huge growth rates in some Asian markets are suffering from the economic downturn.

He said global transaction services had consistently performed well in the last four years. The consumer finance business was also doing very well, he added.

In terms of revenue, consumer finance contributes almost 60 percent of Citi's business in the Philippines while wholesale banking accounts for 40 percent.

Citi is currently working with ATR-Kim Eng Corp. to handle the privatization of a 40-percent government stake in PNOC Exploration Corp.

Veloso said the bank was likewise involved in a number of financial deals, some involving privately held companies, which could not yet be disclosed.

Philippine operations eye more markets

ARMM body to work on halal certification

By Rizz Arao and Dennis Jay Santos
Inquirer Mindanao

DAVAO CITY—THE SAUDI GOVernment has invited the Halal Certification Board of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) to discuss the formulation of international standards on halal certification.

Ismael Ibrahim, the board's managing director, said last week that the invitation proved that Saudi Arabia, regarded as the guardian of the Islamic faith, recognized the ARMM body as a legitimate issuer of halal certification.

He said that during the meeting of the International Halal Integrity Alliance in Jeddah on March 20-27, the board will help in the formulation of a unified standard on halal certification.

A halal certification issued to food and consumer products assures the products were prepared in accordance with Islamic laws.

Ibrahim said they away from products deemed haram or unlawful.

Ibrahim said the recognition will create opportunities for producers of food and consumer products so they can now sell their products to the Middle East with only a few refinements from the ARMM Halal Certification Board.

ARMM Trade Secretary Mimbzar Mangudadatu said the halal market conclusion to grown with the market for halal food products currently pegged at $500 billion.

From page B4

"Investment has been negative due to all of the bad news on the economic front, both abroad and locally," said Jovis Vizon of AB Capital Securities Inc.

The announcement that exports fell 41 percent in January to a seven-year level in eight years "is another piece of bad news due to going to flow into the market", he added.

Rizal-chop Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. fell 2 percent to P2,225.

Manila Electric Co. fell 1.6 percent to P192.50.

San Miguel Corp. nine-to-"B" shares fell 2.5 percent to P43, while its "B" shares slipped 4.5 percent to P42.50. AFP

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

CIRCULAR No. 649
Series of 2009

The Monetary Board, in its Resolution No. 324 dated 19 February 2009, approved the following guidelines governing the issuance of electronic money (e-money) and the operations of electronic money issuers (EMIs) in the Philippines:

Section 1. Declaration of Policy. It is the policy of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) to foster the development of efficient and convenient retail payment and fund transfer mechanisms in the Philippines. The availability and acceptance of e-money as a retail payment medium will be promoted by providing the necessary safeguards and controls to mitigate the risks associated with its e-money issuance.

Section 2. Definition. E-money shall mean monetary value as represented by a claim on its issuer that is –

(a) electronically stored in an instrument or device;

(b) issued against receipt of funds of an amount not lesser in value than the monetary value issued;

(c) accepted as a means of payment by persons or entities other than the issuer;

(d) withdrawable in cash or cash equivalent; and

(e) issued in accordance with the Circular.

Electronic money issuer shall be classified as follows:

(a) Banks (hereinafter called EMI-Banks)

(b) Non-bank financial institutions (NBFI) supervised by the BSP (hereinafter called EMI-NBFI); and

(c) Non-bank institutions registered with the BSP as e-money transfer agent under Section 4(c-1) of the Manual of Regulations for Non-Bank Financial Institutions (MORNBFI) (hereinafter called EMI-Others).

For purposes of this Circular:

1. Electronic instruments or devices shall mean cash cards, e-wallet accessible via mobile phones or other access device, stored value cards, and other similar products;

2. E-money issued by banks shall not be considered as deposits.

Section 3. Prior BSP Approval. Banks planning to be an EMI-Bank shall apply in accordance with Section 4001 of the MORB relating to the guidelines on electronic banking services and with Section 4-1(d) of the MORB on outsourcing of banking functions, when applicable.

NBFIs planning to be an EMI-NBFI shall likewise comply with the requirements of Section 3401 of the Manual of Regulations for Banks (MORB) which shall be made applicable to them and with Section 4-1(d), 3-7(h-4) of the MORNBFI, when applicable.

Non-bank institutions planning to be an EMI-Others shall register with the BSP as a money transfer agent in accordance with the provisions of Section 4(c-1) of the MORNBFI. To qualify for registration, they have to comply with the requirements detailed in Section 5 of this Circular. In case the non-bank institution is already registered with the BSP as a money transfer agent, it is required to meet the additional requirements mentioned under said section to qualify as EMI-Others.

Section 4. Provisions for All EMIs. The following provisions are applicable to all EMIs:

A. E-money replacement issuers shall be subject to aggregate monthly load limit of P100 thousand unless a higher amount has been approved by BSP. In case an EMI issues several e-money instruments to a person (e-money holder), the load amount loaded in all these money instruments shall be consolidated for determining compliance with the aggregate monthly load limit.

B. EMIs shall put in place a system to maintain accurate and complete record of e-money instruments issued, their identity of e-money holders, and transactions and consolidated balances thereof. The system must have the capability to monitor the movement of e-money transactions and link e-money instruments issued to customer e-money holders. The susceptibility of a system to intentional or unintentional misreporting of transactions and balances shall be sufficient ground for imposition by the BSP of sanctions, as may be applicable.

C. E-money may only be redeemed at face value. It shall not earn interest nor rebate and other similar incentives commodities in cash, nor be discounted at a discount. E-money is not considered a deposit hence it is not insured with the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation.

D. EMIs shall ensure that e-money instruments clearly identify the issuer who is ultimately responsible to the e-money holders. This shall be communicated to the client who shall acknowledge the same in writing.

E. It is the responsibility of EMIs to ensure that their distributors/e-money agents comply with all applicable requirements of the Anti-Money Laundering laws, rules, and regulations.

F. EMIs shall provide an acceptable redress mechanism to address the complaints of its customers.

G. EMIs shall disclose in writing and to customers shall signify agreement to the information embodied in item C above upon their participation in the e-money system. In addition, it shall provide clear guidelines on charges and fees, and the customer's recourse mechanism including contact(s) and process for redemption, if any. Information on available redress procedures for complaints together with the address and contact information of the issuer shall also be provided.

H. Prior to the issuance of e-money, EMIs should ensure that the following minimum systems are in place:

- Sound and prudent management, administrative and accounting procedures and adequate internal control mechanisms;
- Property management and security systems which are thoroughly tested prior to implementation;
- Appropriate security policies and measures intended to safeguard the integrity, authenticity and confidentiality of data and operating processes;
- Adequate business continuity and disaster recovery plan; and
- Effective audit function to provide periodic review of the security control environment and critical systems.

I. EMIs shall provide the Supervisory Data Center of the Supervision and Examination Sector (SES) quarterly statements containing, among others, information on investments, volume of transactions, total outstanding e-money balances, and fraud grades in such form as may be prescribed later on.

J. EMIs shall notify BSP in writing of any change or enhancement in the e-money system thirty (30) days prior to its implementation. If said change or enhancement requires prior BSP approval, the same shall be evaluated accordingly. Any change or enhancement to that shall expand the scope or change the nature of the e-money instrument shall be subject to prior approval of the Deputy Governor, Supervision and Examination Sector. These changes or enhancements may include the following:

1. Additional capabilities of the e-money instruments, like access to new channels (e.g., inclusion of internet channel in addition to merchant Point of Sale terminals);
2. Changes in technology service providers and other major partners in the e-money business (including partnership with banks); or any; and
3. Other changes or enhancements.

Section 5. Provisions for EMI-Others. EMI-Others shall comply with the following additional provisions:

A. They must be a stock corporation with a minimum paid-up capital of P100 million;

B. They shall engage only in the business of e-money and other activities related or incidental to the business of e-money, such as money remittance/transfer. An existing entity engaged in activities not related to the business of e-money but wishing to act as EMI-Others must do so through a separate entity duly incorporated exclusively for such purpose;

C. They shall not engage in the extension of credit, unless it complies with the provisions of Section 8 of this Circular;

D. To further protect the e-money holders and ensure that e-money redemptions are adequately met at all times, the entity should keep sufficient liquid assets equal to the amount of outstanding e-money issued. The liquid assets should consist of the following and may take any of the following forms:

1. bank deposits exclusively maintained for liability purposes;
2. government securities set aside for the purpose; and
3. cash other liquid assets as the BSP may allow.

Records pertaining to the above liquid assets shall be made available for inspection by BSP at any time and the confidentiality of bank deposits and government securities shall be waived.

E. The BSP shall be allowed access to review the e-money systems and databases of the entity. Whenever the circumstances warrant, such access shall extend to the agents, partners, service providers or outsourced entities of the EMI-Others in view of their participation in the e-money business;

F. EMI-Others shall submit to the Supervising Data Center of the Supervision and Examination Sector (SES) its audited financial statements (AFS) within thirty (30) days from date of issue of its external auditors.

Section 6. Oil License Requirement. EMI-NBFIs and EMI-Others that engage in lending activities must secure a quasi-banking license from the BSP.

Section 7. Sanctions. Monetary penalties and other sanctions for the following violations committed by EMI-Banks, EMI-NBFIs, and EMI-Others shall be imposed:

Nature of Violation/Failure	Sanctions/Penalties
1. Issuing e-money without prior BSP approval	Applicable penalties under Section 36 (b) of R.A. No. 7653 (New Central Bank Act) and/or Section 34 of the MORB/MORNBFI
2. Violation of any of the provisions of R.A. No. 9160 (Anti-Money Laundering Law) or 2051 as amended by R.A. No. 9194, and its implementing rules and regulations	Applicable penalties prescribed under the Act.
3. Violations of this Circular	Penalties and sanctions under any abovementioned laws and other applicable laws, rules, and regulations

In addition, the susceptibility of a system to intentional or unintentional misreporting of transactions and balances shall be sufficient ground for appropriate BSP action or imposition of sanctions, whenever warranted.

Section 8. Amendments to MORNBFI. The provisions of Section 4001 and related subsections of the MORB on electronic banking are hereby incorporated as Section 4801/3701/4701 and related subsections of the MORNBFI.

Section 9. Transitory provisions. EMI-Banks, EMI-NBFIs, and EMI-Others granted an authority to issue e-money prior to this Circular may continue to exercise such authority, provided that it shall submit to the BSP within one (1) month from the effectivity of this Circular, a certification signed by the President or Officer with equivalent rank and function that it is in compliance with all the applicable requirements of this Circular. Otherwise, they are required to submit within the same period the measures they will undertake, with the corresponding timetables, to conform to the provisions that they have not complied with subject to BSP approval.

Section 10. Effectivity Clause. This Circular shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or any newspaper of general circulation.

For the Monetary Board:

(Sgd.) **ARMANDO M. TETANGCO, JR.**
Governor

30 March 2009

Trojan horses?

SEVERAL BOMBARDIER WORKERS dropped during Monday's favorite hunting on the Legacy watch by former Legacy officials Caroline Miranda and Normandie Pamero-Santos. That they turned the public's eye on the allegedly anomalous practices at the Securities and Exchange Commission was well and good.

However, that testimony came almost two weeks after they, along with several other Legacy officials, were sued by the Shanghai Electrical ng Pilipinas for syndicated estafa and economic sabotage.

According to BEP officials, Miranda's no-nap friends at Santos would become state witnesses because of their positions in the Legacy group, and the fact that most of the anomalous activities happened during their watch.

"You can only make them state witnesses if they are the least guilty," said one official, explaining that they stand above all other officials who have already been charged, even only to Cuban de las Angeles in the groups' pecking order.

Both ladies had sent "benevolent feelers" to the BSP in the past, but the regulator...ever watchful for rogue banks that would turn against them on the witness stand—decided against it.

"They are actually big players," the official said, adding that the BSP has in store an array witnesses who are about to be put under the Department of Justice's witness protection program. Dennis L. Lucas

Biz Buzz

By the mug!

PNOC-EDC sizzles

THE LOCAL stock markets—long obsessed with bleak—has for the first time in over a month found a new darling in another Lopez-controlled company. Geothermal

Exclusive Offer on Flight Upgrades for

PPS CLUB

As a special treat on the 10th anniversary of KrisFlyer, Singapore Airlines Privilege Club (PPC) members can now enjoy as much as 33% discounts starting March 1, 2009 when they redeem for flight upgrades from Economy Class to Business Class or from Business Class to First Class.

This is one of the exclusive benefits of being a member of Singapore Airlines PPS Club, and is applicable for travel throughout the peak summer season until September 30, 2009.

Singapore Airlines PPS Club is exclusively for passengers who frequently fly First and Business Class. For further details, please visit singaporeair.com

Aboitiz Power '08 net income up 4% at ₱4.3B

By Amy R. Remo

ABOITIZ POWER CORP. YESTERDAY reported a 4-percent increase in its net income to ₱4.3 billion despite posting a nonrecurring net loss from foreign exchange revaluation during the period.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Aboitiz Power said it suffered a ₱520-million nonrecurring net loss in 2008 due to foreign exchange net losses of ₱634 million, which resulted from the revaluation of dollar-denominated loans and placements of the parent company and some of its subsidiaries.

The loss was also attributed to the reversal of a ₱266-million provision made by an associate company due to an arbitration settlement and a ₱67-million project cost write-off.

However, Aboitiz Power was able to book ₱4.7 billion in recurring net income in 2008, up from the previous year's ₱3.4 billion.

For the firm's generation business, total electricity sold in 2008 surged 76 percent to 1,720 gigawatt-hours (gWh) from the previous year's 1,018 gWh due mainly to the acquisition of power assets in 2007.

"The takeover and operations of the 100-megawatt (MW) Bunga hydropower plant in July likewise contributed to the increase in the group's generation output," AP said.

Higher rainfall during the year also resulted to higher capacity factors for most of the firm's hydro plants, it added.

The company's power generation group also reported an 18-percent increase in its attributable capacity to 378 MW due also to the turnover of the Bakun-for-Bugas hydro plants.

Aboitiz Power's electricity generation business contributed ₱2.8 billion to the company's total net income, up 6 percent from the previous year's ₱2.6 billion.

"When adjusted for nonrecurring items, the business recorded a 77-percent expansion from ₱1.6 billion in 2007 to ₱2.8 billion in 2008," it added.

For the firm's distribution business, electricity sales in 2008 grew 13 percent, or 5,142 gWh from 4,796 gWh in 2007.

"Aside from the incremental revenue sales from the 2007 acquisitions, the expansion in Subic Enterzone's industrial segment accounted for the strong growth of the distribution group. Power demand increased mainly due to the Manila shipyard operations. On an organic basis, the group recorded a 7 percent growth," Aboitiz Power explained.

Electricity consumption in 2008 of both residential and nonresidential customers trended strong, growing 3 percent and 27 percent, respectively.

NTT raises stake in PLDT to 20.8%

KDDI TELEGRAPH AND TELEPHONE Corp. (NTT) DoCoMo Inc. of Japan, one of the world's leading mobile telecommunications firms, has increased its stake in Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. to 20.8 percent as of February from 16.47 percent at the end of 2008.

In a beneficial ownership report filed with the Philippine Stock Exchange, NTT DoCoMo said it directly (14.37 percent [20.77 million shares]) and indirectly through NTT Communications Corp. (their 6.47 percent (12.63 million shares]) is the local telecom giant.

NTT Communications is the intermediate and long distance service arm of the NTT Group.

PLDT spokesperson Ramon Isberto said the NTT Group shares have been steady at about 21 percent of PLDT's total issued shares since February, which is around 14 percent for DoCoMo and 7 percent for NTT Communications. He also said the group's increased stake was not to breach of foreign ownership limits of Philippine telecommunications firms.

NTT DoCoMo serves more than 54 million customers in Japan, including 46 million using i-mode®, the world's most popular mobile e-mail/Internet platform, and 47 million using Foma, the world's original 3G mobile service based on W-CDMA. It is listed on the Tokyo, London and New York stock exchanges.

In 2006, NTT DoCoMo boosted its stake in PLDT to 9.5 percent through the purchase of an additional 12.63 million PLDT shares or approximately 6.7 percent from NTT Communications Corp.

NTT DoCoMo's additional investment was seen to strengthen the Japanese firm's relationship with PLDT and Smart Communications Inc., PLDT's wholly owned mobile subsidiary. — Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacsamana

ICTSI net profit down 13% last year

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacsamana

PORT OPERATOR INTERNATIONAL Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI) said its net income fell 13 percent to ₱2.86 billion in 2008 from ₱3.29 billion in 2007 as currencies weakened against the dollar in the countries where the company operated.

Net income was also affected by a restatement of the prior year's results with the adoption of new accounting standards, the company said.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, ICTSI said revenues from port operations grew 37 percent to ₱26.6 billion in 2008 from ₱19 billion in 2007.

It said revenues—which represented fees from cargo handling, wharfage and berthing, as well as storage—grew driven mainly by new terminal operations in Honduras, China, Iraq, Georgia and Missouri Detroit in the Philippines and strong organic growth in the company's operations in Brazil, Madagascar, Manila, and Davao.

Revenue contribution from international operations grew 54 percent to ₱11.32 billion from ₱7.36 billion in 2007. Foreign operations accounted for 55 percent of the year's consolidated gross revenue as compared with 49 percent in 2007. Revenue contributions from domestic operations rose 21 percent to ₱9.24 billion from ₱7.62 billion.

The adoption of the new accounting standards reflected an unrealized net foreign exchange gain of ₱933 million in 2007 and a net foreign exchange loss of ₱357 million in 2008, mainly arising from the restatement of dollar-denominated monetary rights payable to local currencies of currency pegs when ICTSI operates.

"In spite of the weak global economy in much of 2008, ICTSI has delivered excellent full year results. However, we do not expect to be immune to the domestic economic situation and the resulting pressures and downturn in global trade, and, thus, we expect 2009 to be a more difficult year," ICTSI chair and president Enrique K. Razon Jr. said.

Biz Buzz

From page B1

crown jewel PHOC-EDC edged out the power distributor as the flavor of the week on expectations that yet another white knight would ride in with a juicy offer. But it's not the same ally as the Lopezes' new BFF ("true friends forever," for those of you not in touch with the times) in Meralco.

To recall, the Lopezes' First Gen Corp., which earlier acquired a 40-percent stake in PHOC Energy Development Corp. for ₱90.5 billion, was left to pick up the tab (its costly borrowings) after its European partner Spalmare Holding BV backed out.

According to the grapevine, the news group, which may soon be in bed with the Lopezes in Red Volcano (the company holding the rights to develop its PHOC-EDC), is a foreign group. It is also, ironically, one of its rivals where the government auctioned its stake in the geothermal company in 2007. But it's not yet a done-in deal, some observers say, as a large Filipino conglomerate (a source of opportunities in clean energy) may bid for the stake, too. — Doris G. Dumlao

Medicine man gets ailing bank

FORMER Unilab president and CEO Carlos "Bo" Ejercito has recently been named chair of the government-controlled United Coconut Planters Bank.

Ejercito's new bet comes a few months after he relinquished the helm of the country's biggest Filipino pharmaceutical firm to Clinton Cazenave Henn, the grandson of the company's founder.

As chair of UCPB, Ejercito will find his hands full juggling the interests of the government (in its various incarnations, from the PCGG to PHIC), private parties like the Ayala Mogul Mark and even customer farmers.

More importantly, he—along with UCPB president Ramon Ang—have the difficult and unenviable task of rehabilitating the bank from a multibillion-peso quagmire of taxpayers' funds back into a profitable institution.

According to our source, Ejercito's appointment was a consensus decision of the government's economic team members. — Dorothy L. Lucas

January ...

From page B1

Also, sales from the fourth top export with a share of 1.9 percent of total and made up of other products manufactured from imported materials increased 15.6 percent to $68.28 million.

Fifth at 1.8 percent of total exports was gold, which likewise increased to $64.7 million or 3.7 percent.

Other top earners were cathodes and semiconductor wafers made of refined copper, which fell 33.9 percent to $41.12 million; fruit bananas, up 24.3 percent to $34.36 million; metal components, up 28.1 percent to $31.50 million; electrical wiring harness for motor vehicles, down 66.3 percent to $27.96 million; and rums, up 70.2 percent to $22.6 million.

Manufactured goods represented 64.8 percent of export receipts, but were down 30.9 percent at $2.12 billion in January.

Exports of agro-based products fell 38.5 percent to $347.15 million; mineral products were down 93.0 percent to $103.81 million; and petroleum products shrank 87.3 percent to $13.52 million.

In January, the four biggest markets for Philippine goods posted mostly declining orders except for third-biggest Germany (9.7 percent of total), shipments to which increased year-on-year by 7.3 percent to $241.27 million.

Cargoes sent to the United States as the biggest batch at 18.3 percent of total outbound traffic, but the volume decreased by 33.6 percent to $456.7 million.

Exports to Japan followed at 15.2 percent of total, going down by 39.7 percent to $379.34 million.

Shipments to The Netherlands were fourth at 9.1 percent of total, sliding by 36.8 percent to $225.84 million.

DOE sees no oil price ...

From page B1

(and) rises prices but there is not much demand anyway, mainly because of the global recession," she said.

Montalbo explained that if over Opec decided to implement the output cut, this would not necessarily translate to immediate and huge increases in the retail prices of oil, and petroleum products since there were other factors affecting prices such as the foreign exchange rate.

She also stressed the less demand for crude oil given the global economic recession, which had prompted many companies worldwide to implement cost-saving measures such as downsizing of operations and job cuts.

"It may not even happen within the year," Montalbo said, referring to Opec's target to influence oil prices to at least $75 a barrel. "The world just cannot afford it right now, with the recession. The general sentiment now is that they won't be able to do it right away."

Montalbo noted, however, that the sentiment of the oil-producing Opec meeting was still "searching to watch out for because Opec is serious on how it can reach its desired price levels."

Net FDI inflow down by 48% in '08

By Michelle V. Rosca

NET FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENTS inflowed into the country last year dropped by 48 percent in the midst of the global turmoil, which was deemed as the worst crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday reported that net inflow of FDIs to the Philippines amounted to only $3.32 billion last year, down from $6.392 billion in 2007.

During the year, the gross FDI inflow amounted to $7.735 billion while total outflow was $3.15 million.

For December 2008, alone, the country posted a net FDI inflow of $89 million, down 3.3 percent from $92 million in the same month the previous year.

The BSP blamed the drop in investments to the lingering risk aversion brought about by the crisis, which originated from the United States but whose effects spilled over to developing and poor countries.

The BSP, however, said the Philippines was still in a better position than the others, as investments still stayed in the positive territory unlike the United States and advanced economies in Europe which have fallen into recession, the Philippines managed to record an economic growth of 4.6 percent last year, aided in part by the inflows of investments.

BSP data showed that of the gross FDI inflows in 2008, $1.56 billion was in the form of equity capital.

The Philippines' major sources of FDIs last year were the United States, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Germany, Malaysia, Taiwan, Hong Kong, United Kingdom and the Netherlands.

Among those that benefited most from the inflows of FDIs last year were the manufacturing, services, mining, construction, utilities, real estate, trade and commerce, and financial sectors.

Fitch Ratings earlier said it expected the Philippines to record a net FDI outflow of $1.6 billion this year, reversing last year's net inflow.

Analysts believe some investors, wanting to protect themselves from declining asset prices, would liquefy their investments.

The BSP, however, said it believed the impact of the global crisis on investments would not be as bad as expected by many. The BSP said there are reasons to believe the Philippines would still record net inflows of FDIs this year, to some extent, including business process outsourcing, continued to draw encouraging income performance.

Hoping to boost investments at a time of global turmoil, the BSP has been easing its monetary policy. The BSP cut its overnight borrowing and lending rates by a total 125 basis points since December, and has slashed the reserve requirement for banks from 21 to 19 percent of deposit liabilities.

By lowering its borrowing rate, the BSP is hoping banks would lend more of their funds instead of parking them as deposits to the central bank. The reduced lending rate, meanwhile, is hoped to encourage banks to cut the interest rate they charge their customers.

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RP still in a better position than other countries affected by crisis, says BSP

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RCBC ties up with affiliate on bancassurance venture

By Doris C. Dorian

THE YUCHENGCO RIZAL COMMERCIAL Banking Corp. is going into the bancassurance business for non-life insurance products in partnership with affiliate Malayan Insurance Corp.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, RCBC said it had signed an agreement to acquire a 5.64-percent stake in Mina Engineering, the holding group's holding company for its stake in Malayan Insurance.

The acquisition will be made through a P636.25-million share-swap deal, wherein RCBC will give 41.99 million of its shares in Mina Equity in exchange for 160,650 Mina Equity shares.

Bancassurance refers to the practice of selling insurance products through bank branches. But under Philippine laws, a bank must own at least 5 percent of a composite or life insurance firm before it could be selling.

To be able to sell Malayan's products, RCBC has to acquire a stake in the company.

Under the share-swap deal, RCBC shares were valued at P11.26 per share, while a Mina Equity share was valued at P1,775.60.

RCBC has an existing bancassurance agreement with another affiliate, Grepalife Life Assurance Corp., for life insurance.

Malayan Insurance is considered the core company of the Malayan Group. The risks it covers include fire, marine, insurance, miscellaneous casualty and personal accident, and surety.

The share-swap deal that will pave the way for the bancassurance agreement is subject to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' approval.

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Phoenix acquires Transoil stake in BIPC

By Amy R. Remo

LISTED FIRM TRANS-ASIA OIL and Energy Development Corp. said it concluded yesterday a share purchase agreement with independent oil player Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Trans-Asia Oil said it sold to Phoenix Petroleum its entire 30-percent equity in Batangas Industrial Park Inc. (BIPC) consisting of 1.8 million shares.

BIPC is the industrial properties development arm of Philippine Investment Management (Phinma), a business group engaged in energy and mining, property and shelter, education and financial services.

The other major shareholder of BIPC is Batangas Consolidated Industries Inc. which owns a 60-percent stake in the company.

Trans-Asia Oil said the 30-share were sold for P4.08.81 per share.

Phoenix is expected to pay immediately 35 percent of the total purchase cost as down payment. The balance will be paid in monthly installments in the next five years.

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PAL increases domestic, international flights

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Larson

FLAG CARRIER PHILIPPINE Airlines is increasing its Vancouver flights and adding services to Seoul as new Incheon Runway and Pusan gain clearance.

Starting March 23, PAL will operate a direct flight to Vancouver from Manila every Monday and Wednesday which will result in daily flights in this route, filling the only two days of the week when PAL does not operate in this route.

But unlike the other five days, the new service will not continue on to Las Vegas.

PR 116 departs Manila every Monday and Wednesday at 6:05 p.m., arriving in Vancouver at 10:20 a.m. the same day. The return service, PR 117, departs Vancouver at 1 p.m. and arrives in Manila at 3:50 p.m. the next day.

Airbus A340-300, which seats 264 passengers in a tri-class layout, will be used for this service.

PAL presently serves the Manila-Vancouver-Las Vegas route every Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

In the meantime, PAL will add one weekly flight each to its Manila-Pusan service on Luzon-Jeju and San Francisco this summer.

An extra Airbus A340-300 flight will operate to Los Angeles every Friday from April 10 to June 19 while another A340-300 flight will serve San Francisco every Sunday from April 12 to June 21.

The additional flights in-

SEE INCREASES ON P

CebuPac offers seat sale

CEBU PACIFIC IS OFFERING A one-way seat sale from all its hubs—Cebu, Clark, Davao and Manila—from March 10 to 11, 2009.

The promotional seat sale is valid for travel from April 1 to July 31, 2009. Domestic fares are all-inclusive, but regional passengers need to pay travel taxes, except OFWs and foreigners staying in the Philippines for less than a year who are exempt. Promo fares are non-refundable.

CEB is offering a P1,488 one-way "Go Lite" fare for its Manila-Iloilo, Cagayan and Manila-Bacolod-ng services. This is also extended to services from Clark to Bangkok, Hong Kong, Macau and Singapore.

The budget airline is also offering a one-way P1,388 "Go Lite" all-in fare for its Manila to Catarman and Butuan services.

From Cebu, the airline is offering a one-way P588 all-in "Go Lite" fare to Bacolod, Cagayan de Oro, Dumaguete and Surigao, and a one-way P488 all-in "Go Lite" fare to Guimaras, Iloilo, Ormoc, Legaspi, Ozamis, Puerto Princesa, Siargao, Tacloban and Zamboanga.

From Davao, the airline is offering a one-way P588 all-in "Go Lite" fare to Iloilo and Zamboanga.

E-mail: jc_motoring@inquirer.com.ph

MOTORING

Editor Cesar G. Mangaoang

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CREFT Pub. about within the group

If all the cars we drive were like...

By Charles E. Bahnar

OVERNIGHT YOU'D find our country's thoroughfares would be a lot more habitable since exhaust smoke will be gone and loud noise minimized. Because this car runs on batteries, all you'll hear is a low hum.

That sleek-looking car could drive 64 kilometers on battery power alone and if the stop-go's much longer its gasoline engine is activated...not to run the car—but to generate power to extend the Volt's driving range beyond what its battery could provide on a single charge.

This plug-in hybrid is definitely General Motors' best shot at redemption considering the US car giant's current financial difficulties.

But more than GM's motive, the Volt has the best potential to reduce our country's petroleum consumption and, presumably, its production of greenhouse gas emissions.

And don't think the Volt will remain long in the testing stages since this car is scheduled to hit American showrooms next year.

Subaru Forester 2.5XT. There we will all have a well-rounded car that we could use to take kids to school, haul groceries, venture off the beaten track or sprint from one traffic light to another.

Powered by a 227 horsepower turbocharged gasoline engine and equipped with Subaru's signature Symmetrical All-Wheel-Drive system, the Forester 2.5XT offers a more nimble and controllable driving platform that promises to bring smile as you weave through traffic or tramp down a serpentine road.

But aside from its sports car like ride and maneuverability, this crossover SUV is equipped with seats that could be folded down or reclined so you could load all sorts of stuff.

Lexus IS 460LThey say would all know how an 8-ball feels when whenever he's commuting in and around the city.

This 88,238-million, long wheelbase version of that full-sized sedan is oozing with luxury: ventilated seats (that recline up to 45 degrees) that come with massage's while outfitted by a DVD entertainment system (with a 9-inch screen) and theater-class entertainment coming from a 15-speaker Mark Levinson surround sound audio system.

To add insult, the rare rear passengers also get to enjoy soft-touch top-grade leather upholstery, power sunshades at the rear doors, a box that cools beverages and a center console offering a remarkable table of polished wood.

Since the IS 460L enjoys an extra 12 centimeters to the midsection, those at the back seat will definitely appreciate the extra legroom. Bring on the cars!

Auto industry still in high gear, thanks to new models

By Tess R. Salazar

AS GLOOMY INDUSTRY news from the West keep pouring in, local auto assemblers and carmakers are their tends huff &ill.

This continuous optimism is manifested in industry forecasts of between 2- and 4-percent growth for the year, and steady vehicle sales are expected in the coming months.

"We are indeed cheerful and continue to be cautiously optimistic, especially when new (models of the model year) into inventories year and auto sales elsewhere are plunging," says Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (Campi) head Elizabeth Lee in a press statement.

"We continue to bank on sustained OFW remittances, the entrepreneurial trend, and the revival of the secondhand market to help boost sales," she adds. Commercial vehicles continue to dominate the market with a 63-percent market share, registering an 8.3-percent growth versus January sales. CVs include multipurpose vehicles such as AUVs (Asian utility vehicles), pickups, vans, compact wagons or compact sport utility vehicles (SUVs) and full-sized SUVs.

In the latest Campi report, the local auto industry registered a 2.7 percent growth in sales, selling 9,027 units for the month of February versus January.

Lee compared this slight but positive growth as "remarkable," considering how other major markets such as the United States—where auto sales plunged another 41 percent in February alone—had been performing. Although year-to-date local sales registered a slight 2.5-percent decline for January and February versus the same period last year, local auto players are hopeful that the increase in local February sales is a positive sign indicative of a growth trend for 2009.

Helping boost the upbeat mood is a raft of new vehicles being introduced in the country as of late.

Hyundai's double introduction

The Gremlin Group, Hyundai's newest and visibly former addition to its family of automobiles, was formally introduced in the Philippine motoring media a few weeks ago. The other element of the double celebration was the inauguration of Hyundai Asia Resources Inc.'s new headquarters in KPMG Centre on Ayala Avenue.

A year following its successful global launch, the Hyundai Genesis received the coveted 2009 North American Car of the Year award.

'Business class' with Ford

The launch of Ford Group Philippines' two full-sized vehicles, the 2009 Ford Expedition Eddie Bauer EL and E-150 Club Wagon, evoked the effect of luxurious airline cabins, complete with "crown-theater" clad in snappy hues.

The 2009 Expedition, the iconic full-sized SUV for the nation's movers and shakers, presented a few changes for the new EL version, including an 185-capable (10-percent enhanced fuel blend) 5.4-liter engine, and Ford's SYNC connectivity technology.

The 2009 E-150 Club Wagon, the US best-selling full-sized van for 226 years, also presented itself with a few creature comfort enhancements.

Autohub marks a decade

The Autohub Group of Companies, a one-stop auto shop in Cemenca Park West in Bonifacio Global City, celebrated its 10th year on Feb. 28 at the SOC Tent at Fort Bonifacio. Autohub also hosts auto delis, spare parts and accessories, and other services such as vehicle repair and maintenance, car loans, and car sales, detailing, body paint and repair, LTO and insurance renewals.

The SOC Tent was transformed into Autohub's premier platform featuring premium car brands—Ford, Nissan, BMW, Hyundai, Chery and JMC with its subsidiaries/affiliates.

Dealer principal Willy Q. Tee Tee was credited for Autohub's success. He entered in the form of automotive dealership in 1998 with the launch of Ford Malate, which later transformed to the bigger and better facility at Ford Global City.

THE 2009 Ford Expedition Eddie Bauer EL

Mercedes' new (not so) baby SUV

THERE'S A NEW BABY IN TOWN, AND it's a Mercedes-Benz. While the GLK can be called a baby since it is Daimler-Benz's smallest sport utility vehicle, its angular profile and strong, straight lines suggest something heavier and tough, rather than baby-cute. By its size, style and design, the GLK is definitely not a girl's car.

With its tall roof and square-cut lines, the GLK looks more like a small, gentrified version of the G-Class, Mercedes' boxy, long-range, all-terrain SUV, rather than the GL-Class, Mercedes' seven-passenger cross-country vehicle. But since the GLK 280 is built on the same platform as the C-Class sedan's and is powered by the 3.0-liter V-6 engine of the C280, it is basically a luxury compact car-based five-seater crossover designed primarily for on-road use...unless you opt for the GLK's off-road package.

Kate

The latest X-in GLK reportedly stands for "extreme," "urban" or "unique" in German. But the GLK is not just a smart off version of the G-Class. Although its overall height is shorter than the latter SUV by about 6.5 cm, its engine rivals in the premium compact SUV segment, the GLK is wider and lower. The GLK 280 Edition 1, the model that CATS Motor Inc. sells, has a sports suspension lowered by 30 mm.

The C-Class sedan chassis of the GLK 280, enhanced by Mercedes' Agility Control suspension with selective damping system, gives it an edge over competitors in terms of a smooth, comfortable ride like city quality in impressive chassis dynamics and distinctive refinement driver's sports sedan-like driving experience, with light steering and minimal body leans in turns.

However, there is nothing not like about the GLK's fuel consumption, estimated at 8.73 km per liter in the city and 9.25 km/liter highway. A name is all efficient 4-cylinder, 170-hp GLK 220 CDI (common-rail direct-injection diesel engine) is forthcoming. In Europe and the United States, the GLK model available is a 3.5-liter, 268 hp V6 based on the Mercedes C350 sedan platform.

Low-end torque

The GLK 280 Edition 1's 3.0-liter V-6 aluminum alloy power plant produces 231 max horsepower at 6,000 rpm and 222 lb-ft peak torque at 2,400 - 5,000 rpm, with a lot of low-end torque. 7G-Tronic, the world's first seven-speed automatic transmission for passenger vehicles, is standard equipment in all GLK models. Other sport-sensitive powertrain touches: Shift paddles on the AMG multifunction leather steering wheel contribute to the sporty feel.

Aside from driving comfort, when you drive the GLK you will note its stability and superb grip, whatever the road and weather conditions. Credit this to 4Matic, Mercedes' permanently engaged all-wheel drive system including the BAS (electronically controlled brake assist), ASR (acceleration skid control) and ESP (Electronic Stability Program). The GLK 280 Edition 1's 20-inch light alloy wheels are shod with mixed-size tires, 235/50 front and 255/45 rear. The Adaptive Brake System with ABS, brake assist and hill start assist is standard.

Impeccably posh

As expected of a Mercedes, the interior of the GLK 280 Edition 1 (SRP P4,450,000) is impeccably posh, with black/white (aqua) leather seats, black/white (aqua) leather seats, black/white (aqua) leather seats, aluminum trim in the dash and interior door openers, brushed stainless steel pedals, illuminated scuttle-sill

SEC, bourse move to boost equities, bond markets

Measures not as drastic as those in developed countries

By Doris C. Dumlao

FRANCIS Lim

LOCAL CORPORATE REGULATORS are mapping out new measures to perk up investor interest in the equities and bond markets despite the lingering global financial turmoil.

The measures being considered by the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Philippine Stock Exchange include the introduction of new products such as exchange-traded funds (ETFs) and real estate investment trusts (REITs), and the development of a multi-employer investment and a more active securities borrowing and lending program.

The Philippine Stock Exchange also intends to develop a platform for commodities and derivatives trading and introduce an Islamic index that will cherry-pick stocks of Shariah-compliant companies.

In a presentation during the Philippine Capital Markets Conference yesterday, SEC Commissioner Aurelio Cuevo said there was no need yet to adopt the drastic reforms proposed in more developed markets—such as regulation of hedge funds, mandatory recapitalization programs and requirements to maintain separate risk and charge capital against it.

"We will, however, continue to monitor the industry and study the applicability of the reforms being done that are happening in other jurisdictions," Cuevo said.

Cuevo said the SEC was also supportive of the PSE's plan to establish inside linkages with various Southeast Asian stock exchanges. She said the SEC had been actively participating in regional meetings meant to harmonize various rules and regulations to facilitate interbourse activities.

She said the SEC also wanted to see a more diverse array of products in the market and was now awaiting the introduction by the PSE of the ETFs and REITs. She said the SEC was also fully supportive of the programs of the Philippine Dealing and Exchange Corp., the country's fixed income trading platform, to subscribe for listing more privately issued bonds as well as to operate a debt securities market for initial public offerings of fixed income instruments.

In the meantime, PSE president Francis Lim said the local bourse was open to proposals, such as that from firm Folgardo Angeles, to ease the listing requirements not just for mining but for other key sectors.

Lim said the introduction of an Islamic stock index could attract not only Islamic investors, because Shariah requires a more stringent corporate governance framework, but said the index would be helpful for non-Islamic investors too.

In fact, he said Standard & Poor's had already developed an Islamic index for emerging markets. He noted that since listed Philippine companies made it to the list.

Lim also said there is quality for an Islamic stock index would be those engaged in telecommunications and property development.

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CLSC sets growth goal at 30%

By Michelle V. Baron

DESPITE THE GLOBAL CRISIS WHICH IS feared to result in drastic wage and job cuts overseas, Cebuana Lhuillier Savings Bank Corp. is optimistic its remittances business will manage to post a 30 percent growth this year.

CLSC general manager Fernando Bautista, however, said the growth target would be lower than the 60-percent growth posted last year, equivalent to at least P1.5 billion in worth of remittances.

But even the 30-percent growth target, if achieved, would be a respectable performance considering that the industry is expected to post lower growth, Bautista said.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas earlier said remittances from overseas Filipino workers would register the growth this year from last year's $16.4 billion. But CLSC is optimistic the industry will post growth.

"If you look at figures from the POEA [Philippine Overseas Employment Administration], you will see that deployment of Filipino workers abroad is still growing," Bautista said yesterday in an interview with the bourse.

Using data from the POEA, the BSP earlier reported that over a million Filipinos were deployed to work abroad last year.

Bautista said if ever some Filipinos would be removed by layoffs, they were not likely to go back to the Philippines. Instead, they may also seek to look for another job.

"Remittances will continue to grow. We believe there would be a slowdown, but are not expecting a contraction," he said.

Ask about the growth drivers for CLSC this year, he said the company was expanding its market this year via tie-ups with more banks and international remittance companies.

Bautista said CLSC, the remittance arm of PLUS Multinational Corp., was also in the period to finalize its partnerships with Banco de Oro and Bank of the Philippine Islands in May.

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MAJOR TOPICS

- Project Development Alternatives –Own Organization vs. Outsourced
- Joint Venture Parameters
- Project Marketing Alternatives (Marketing Network, Brokers, or Internal Marketing Force)
- Property Management Issues
- Actual Application to Participants' Property/Project

Prof. Richard L. Cruz is a core faculty in the Master in Business Management (MBM) Program of the Ateneo Graduate School of Business (AGSOB) of the Asian Institute of Management (AIM). He teaches accounting and financial management courses in the MBM Program and in the Asian Center for Entrepreneurship (ACE).

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ASIAN CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP & MANAGEMENT EDUCATION, INC.

Lexus optimistic on RP market

By Abigail L. Ho

ALTHOUGH STILL OPTIMISTIC THAT THE economic slump will not hit its market that much, Lexus Manila Inc. is sticking to a 2008-unit sales target for the year, or the lower end of its sales target range of 2008 to 3008 units.

In an interview during the launch of the new Lexus RX350 Monday evening, Lexus Manila president Daniel Ido said 2008 units was a relatively safe target for the company for this year.

But he was quick to say that sales had not been affected that much by the global recession, as Lexus Manila had already sold 23 units since it started selling locally on Jan. 16.

"We have really good cars, and our market remains relatively insulated from what's happening in the economy," he told reporters.

Lexus Manila's bestseller so far is the LX570, a sport utility vehicle that sells for more than P7.2 million. Another favorite is the higher-priced model among those that Lexus sells at its Manila showroom—the LS460L sedan, which is priced at P6.1 million for the base sedan and almost P7.3 million for the five-seater model.

These two models are the most expensive among the six offered in the Philippines' luxe Lexus showroom located within the Bonifacio Global City in Taguig.

"It's the really different ones they draw," he said.

He expressed confidence that the latest Lexus model launched on Philippine shores—the RX350 luxury SUV—would help drive sales in the coming months.

Formally launched Monday, Ido said Lexus Manila already had 20 customers lined up for the new RX, 8% of whom had paid deposits for their units.

"The Philippines is similar to the US market, and the RX350 is the best-selling compact SUV in the US," he said.

Lexus describes the RX350 as a "crossover" luxury SUV, as it blends "the comfort of a luxury sedan with the pleasurable excitement of an SUV."

"Sales have been modest, and we are delighted with the units reception to Lexus, notwithstanding the emerging economic conditions. This has reinforced our belief that there is a distinct group who has a special attachment to Lexus, and who believe in what we call contemporary kind of luxury... are the classy types that reflect a quiet expression of fulfillment and a personal value for self," Ido said.

PAL increases domestic, international . . .

From page B1

crease the total frequency to Los Angeles to 18 times weekly and to San Francisco to eight times weekly this summer.

From March 29, PAL Express will add one daily flight between Manila and Caticlan boosting total frequency on the busy route to 13 flights daily.

On the same day, PAL Express will operate a second daily flight between Manila and Busuanga, the largest city of the Calamian group of islands in northern Palawan.

The new frequency to an afternoon service that complements the current morning flight. PR 603 departs Manila at 1 p.m. and arrives in Busuanga at 2:00 p.m. Return flight PR 604 departs Busuanga at 2:30 p.m. and arrives in Manila at 3:35 p.m.

PAL Express will also add two weekly flights between Cebu and Legazpi in Dec to increase total frequency to five times weekly

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BUSINESS

Toyota Prius to hit RP roads by June 2009

Philippine market ready for environment-friendly cars

By Abigail L. Ho

TOYOTA MOTOR PHILIPPINES Corp. is set to bring its Prius hybrid car model to the country by June, amid global efforts to come up with ways to limit carbon dioxide emissions.

TMP vice chair Alfred Ty said the company "very recently" got the go-ahead from Toyota Motor Corp. in Japan to finally bring the Prius here.

"That should come very soon, within the year—preferably by midyear," he said on the sidelines of the launch of the Lexus RX350 Monday evening. "There's a market for that here, that's why we're bringing it in (to the Philippines)."

As for the pricing, he said this had not yet been finalized as there were a lot of things to consider, chief of which were the exchange rates for the yen and the US dollar.

He said it would help if the government could provide TMP with some incentives to bring the Prius into the country.

"The government has to help. It can't be a one-way thing. (The Prius) has benefits to the environment, so the government has to help. That's how it works in other countries," he said. "We want to get subsidies, but that's still under process."

In many of its markets, Prius buyers are treated to a host of incentives, including tax reductions, subsidies and even parking priorities, to stimulate the use of environment-friendly vehicles.

The Toyota Prius runs on both gasoline and electricity. It is sold in more than 50 countries worldwide, its biggest markets being the United States and Japan.

Meanwhile, Ty said TMP's sales for the year should be around the same as in 2008—or 45,915 units. The company closed 2008 with a market share of 36.7 percent.

"We'll try to maintain our volume and protect our share of the market. The growth is quite good in this kind of market," he said.

He expressed optimism that the local auto industry would not succumb to the global recession as much as other countries, particularly the United States.

"The Philippines was one of the countries that posted growth in 2008. Our economy has proven to be much more resilient than other countries. Our banking industry is stable and firm. (Overseas Filipino workers) remittances are also a big factor. Those reduced to cash-in-hand purchasing," he said.

For 2009, he said TMP would continue to "cater to the demands of the market."

He added that TMP would be closely watching the trend of shifting to smaller cars.

Aboitiz Transport income sinks to P82.8M in 2008

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

ABOITIZ TRANSPORT SYSTEM, THE FERRY business of the Aboitiz clan, reported a sharp decline in net income to P82.8 million in 2008 from P469 million in 2007, the company said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE).

The company explained, however, that the sale of three shipping vessels (classified in 2007 net income.

Without the gains of P405 million from the sale of vessels in 2007, net income that year would have stood at only P115 million.

In its disclosure, ATS said revenues rose 25 percent in 2008 to P5.3 billion versus P4.2 billion in 2007.

Its freight business contributed P3.4 billion in revenues in 2008, a 22 percent or P598 million increase from P2.8 billion in 2007.

The company's freight rates per twenty-equivalent unit (TEU) rose 16 percent as freight capacity is being filled up with its existing supply chain and value-added businesses.

Its "passage business"—which refers to ferry-operation services offered by its shipping brands SuperFerry and Negrosnav—generated revenues of P2.9 billion, down slightly from P3.05 billion in 2007.

The sewage into its passenger has gone down by 5 percent amid year-round promotional rates to drive up demand coupled with stiff competition from airlines.

Similar to the freight business, its passage capacity remained at over 3 million passengers but with a capacity higher by from over at 70 percent, the highest attained in four years.

For 2008, much of the ATS's efforts were geared toward developing its value-added business—such as warehousing and marketing—whose it believes its future lies.

Aboitiz One Distribution Inc.'s new warehouse located in Taguig City has been operational since the beginning of 2009.

In addition, Aboitiz One Inc. purchased Ironside Overseas Inc., a company engaged in the sale and distribution of food products to customers in the Philippines. These resulted in a 46-percent increase in service fee revenues to P674.6 million and a 41.8 percent increase in sale of goods to P1.2 billion in 2008.

Total costs and expenses jumped 23 percent driven mainly by higher fuel costs.

Germany aids RP health programs

By Konrad M. Dumaraos

THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT HAS OFfered to provide 25 million euros (about P1.3 billion) in the form of a debt swap to support health projects related to the Millennium Development Goals, according to the National Economic and Development Authority.

Neda Director General Ralph G. Recto said the proposed debt swap would serve as the Philippines' contribution to the MDGs since the health projects involved deal with HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

During information from the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Recto explained that under Germany's enhanced process for debt servicing, the Philippines will no longer have to pay certain loans, but instead use the unpaid debt to finance health programs.

The MDGs formulated by the United Nations comprise eight goals that touch on basic social issues.

These goals include eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, providing primary education services to all, promoting gender equality and empowering women, reducing the incidence of death among children, improving maternal health, fighting diseases like HIV/AIDS and malaria, ensuring environmental sustainability and developing a global cooperation for development efforts.

Noting that the projects aim to be the proposal, Recto said the Neda will await the signal from agencies on the projects that may be covered under the debt swap.

In a related development, the United Nations Children's Fund has extended by two more years a program promoting children's welfare in the Philippines as it is set to sign with the Neda an agreement that provides $11.54 million or some P561 million in funding for various projects.

According to the Neda, Unicef has extended until 2011 its five-year Basic Country Program for Children (CPC 6), which is supposed to have reached its final year this year.

In BPO sector, English skills no longer enough

By Abigail L. Ho

WHILE THE PHILIPPINES' DEEP BENCH OF English speakers makes the country top of mind for most companies offshoring some of their functions, workers of the host business process outsourcing sector need to go beyond just English proficiency to advance in the field.

"What we need is strong analytical, problem-solving and critical thinking. We don't want to hire a 'potential.' We want to hire people who can immediately play the role of manager because the processes in the industry are enormous," Bert Philippines Corp.'s Noel Inciong said in a forum yesterday.

Right now, he said there was still a dearth of BPO managers and executives, despite there being an estimated 400,000 workers in the BPO sector.

Accenture Philippine recruitment head Rhea Clarino agreed, saying most of the company's high-value, healthcare-related services were still headed by expatriates.

This made leadership positions in the BPO sector a challenge, she said.

She said the global rate in the BPO industry was "very poor" at around 5 percent—or five hires from a set of 100 applicants.

JP Morgan country operations manager Barry Marshall, for his part, said BPO workers who could offer more than good English would make the industry more sustainable.

"Because of the economic crisis, cost efficiency has become a critical factor. To be a globally integrated enterprise, one has to think more about the long-term play and not just short-term labor arbitrage," he said.

"Labor arbitrage is also over time. What we need are people who can contribute to the bottom line. Success comes from a combination of labor arbitrage and cost efficiency. There would make for a successful long-term play," he added.

He said critical thinking was an important trait for BPO workers to imbibe, as this provided added value to what they could do, beyond answering calls and doing basic voice functions, critical thinking could be applied to other aspects of the BPO chain.

"Just having English proficiency doesn't give us sustainability. That's good for immediate hiring. But for long-term sustainability, we need soft skills and critical thinking," he said

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Old World charm blends with Filipino artistry

How a gentleman makes his home reflect his tastes and interests

By Gia Bernardo and Fiveanne Jacinto
Photos by Boboi Moro

WE VISITED A GENtleman's home in a small village in Makati.

He welcomed us warmly and showed us around his home—a mix of Asian, Filipino, Muslim and western styles, all reflective of this gentleman's cosmopolitan tastes and lifestyle.

Most notable are old maps of the Philippines found all over his home, most of them acquired in Europe. Armoires depicting Bilad (a ritual stage of Eid Dhi ain al-Adha) are prominently displayed, all delicately sculpted through the years from different parts of the world.

In the garden, a majestic Buddha head is the focal point, surrounded by branches of a huge tree.

The home has a warm and welcoming feel. Old World charm meets Filipino artistry. The living

OLD WORLD C2

ANTIQUE shop set from the Philippine South, Bicolandia and Jarique maps of the Philippines acquired from Europe and the US.

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glorietta
GREENBELT

Old World charms blends with Filipino artistry

From page C1

room has two sitting areas, with furniture from the owner's trips to Davao, mixed with antique heritage pieces from his family in Europe.

The den has the owner's rare and antique book collection, including a first edition "Noli Me Tangere" written in Spanish that he found in a market. The market vendor was using the pages to wrap purchased items from her store. The book is now fully restored and kept in a special box.

This was definitely a nice afternoon spent with a very gracious and sophisticated gentleman.

A PLOW serves as base of a coffee table.

PAINTING AS BACKDROP

NUN A nude painting is the backdrop of an antique table with various coffee table books. Framed antique maps and a funeral Sarong are propped on the table.

RECTANGULAR antique wooden contraption, used by Davao fishermen to hold down their nets, is filled with glass balls.

THE BELL is from Davao, mixed with various accent pieces and complemented by European floral prints.

AN OLD door serves more antique books, kept in a cabinet, and antique prints.

OLD PAIR extinguisher is used as lamp base.

TABAK seat from Mindanao

BUDDHA head from Burma is the focal point in the garden.

Good finds in the south

HOME SPECIALTY STORES HAVE PROLIFERATED in the south, particularly in BF Homes Parañaque. Your guide:

FROM India, rugged, antique cabinet, Artist Malden, Warsaw St., BF Homes, Parañaque. tel. 891-1011111, 891-0209694

LAMPS FROM INDONESIA. Hanging lamps from Indonesia in various designs and colors, some in stained glass decor. Wonders, 53 Warsaw St., BF Homes, Parañaque

FROM Davao, cabinet with mirror, eating design and bronze handles. **H&B** Home Décor, 127 Aguirre Ave., BF Homes, Parañaque, tel. 820-01-61, 8387131

BALINESE mirror, Wonders, 53 Warsaw St., BF Homes, Parañaque

AUTHENTIC vintage heater from the U.K. Hermicia Antiques Showroom, 219 Aguirre Ave., BF Homes, Parañaque, tel. 7168516

COPPER grinder lamp, Hermicia Antiques Showroom, 219 Aguirre Ave., BF Homes, Parañaque, tel. 7168516

TRADITIONAL door from Indonesia, Wonders, 53 Warsaw St., BF Homes, Parañaque

FROM Vigan, modern contraption used as outdoor bar. Vigan vase on top made of polished iron and a fruit vase. Hermicia Antiques Showroom, 219 Aguirre Ave., BF Homes, Parañaque, tel. 7168516

THE TILE-LINED pathway leading to the lobby has lush foliage.

The best of both worlds

THE KOI POND and fountain by Lizo Mercado

PATHWAY with white chlumbergia flowers

By Lia S. Bernardo

THE BIGGEST SETBACK to condo living is being surrounded by all that concrete. It was such a pleasure spending Sunday afternoon at Serendra and viewing the gardens that surround one of the most prestigious addresses in the country today.

We walked through a palm-lined entry under a canopy of white chumbergia flowers on the way to the residential units.

There was a relaxing koi pond lined with boulders where you can sit and relax. For those who want to meditate, there will be a Zen garden.

Back to our conversation of condo living—having a garden without having to maintain it yourself.

In the children's playground is another patch where residents can pick fresh sprigs of oregano, lemon grass and even calamansi.

A great way to refuse after a long day at work is to simply take a walk around the gardens of Serendra.

AT THE OPENING: ACE marketing manager Gerard Lim, marketing manager Helen Ong, ADMM Anthony Oy, VP for operations Bernard Lim, ADMM Grace Ang, senior marketing manager for ACE Paints Toto Padua, AVP for operations Edwin Ting, VP for merchandising Mark Chua, marketing manager Jayson Tan

One-stop home shop opens in the north

ACE BUILDER'S CENTER RECENTLY opened at the domain at SM City North Edsa.

On the ground floor of SM's first supermall, the 7,000-sq m store is a one-stop shop for home-building makeovers and renovations. It has a wide selection of steel bars for solid foundations, cement for building homes and a lot of woodwork—plywood panels, laminboards and cornices—for walls, floors and ceilings.

For finishing touches, it also has PVC doors, plumbing and electrical supplies, and ACE Paints, which are lead-free and odorless, and over 2,000 colors to choose from in its automated color-matching program. You can know the exact colors you wear by simply bringing swatches, which the computers will decipher.

ACE Builders Center also has bathroom solutions for your home—considerations for bathroom sinks, compact shower rooms, ceramic toilets, whirlpool bathtubs and steam bath units—which come with free installation service. It also has a Garden Center, which blooms with landscaping and gardening essentials, as well as live and artificial plants.

It has traditional ACE Hardware items for fix-its and cleanups. These include power tools, electrical and lighting fixtures, storage solutions, and items for cleaning up the car and house.

Other areas are the Pet Corner for kids and animal lovers and the Wholesale Center for purchases in bulk.

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Not all helmets are created equal

THE CONSUMER
Linda B. Adolfo

ARTURO LOMIBAO, CHIEF OF THE Land Transportation Office (LTO), has announced he will satisfy requests for him to do one of motorcycle helmets—a test of his "potential."

Well and good. But I hope they will also ensure that motorcycle riders use the right helmet. Many riders are usually seen wearing light and thin bicycle or baseball helmets. Though I haven't seen anybody using military helmets, it will probably offer better protection.

There are good reasons why basketball head protection is designed the way it is and why helmets for bicycle riders are the way they are—different considerations.

A motorcycle helmet is no cheap more expensive than a bicycle or baseball helmet, but the price difference has nothing to do with head safety.

A motorcyclist helmet cushions the head.

Requiring motorcycle riders to use a helmet will do very little to reduce the number of serious accidents.

As much as possible, motorcycle users should also avoid having passengers. But given that cars are expensive and public transport unreliable, it might be difficult to require that of people. The LTO can reduce the risk by requiring passengers to wear the proper headgear, too.

Authorities should reduce the helmet regulations, just as they should the seatbelt regulations.

The other important thing Lomibao should do is make sure motorcycle riders know traffic rules. Just because their vehicles are only a third or a fourth of the other vehicles on the road does not mean they can ignore signs and rules. Many seats have painted on them dozen advice to passengers getting off, to watch out the motorcyclist that pop out of nowhere.

Clarification needed

Angelo Constantino Medina of Inchapeller, Manila, says, though he is an lawyer "a permanent government employee," he is still hoping the Civil Service Commission will resolve once and for all his questions about becoming to the June 2006 Career Officer Executive Examination. Medina said a letter he got from CSC in November 2004 said he obtained a rating of 93 and passed two of three competency areas covered by the test.

But after the eyeballing, which he paid for himself, the CSC said in January 2007 he actually passed only one, not two. Medina thinks he, in fact, passed all three areas, but suspects politics was the culprit. He hopes the CSC will do a more thorough review of the case. Medina says he is only fighting for what is right.

Send letters to The Consumer, Lifestyle Section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5th Floor, Times Bldg., 1000 Quezon Ave. cor. Matandon and Bgy. Sto. Domingo, Quezon City, fax 3974783/84, or e-mail lbadolfo@inquirer.com.ph

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Goings On

PhilPost stamp celebrates RP-Korea friendship

THE PHILIPPINE AND KOREA WILL CELEBRATE 60 years of diplomatic relations with the issuance of Philippine Postal Corporation's (PhilPost) commemorative stamps, highlighting the festivals Pangalanga and Soneol in Hangeul. It on Philippines and Korea, respectively. The stamp will be on sale at PP and PRO denominations with the first 500 sheets will be given to the partner country. Pangalanga Flower Festival is held every February in Baguio City. Korea's Soneol in Hangeul falls every 15th of August.

La Camara's 110th year

The Spanish Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines, more popularly known as La Camara, is celebrating its 110th anniversary with a cocktail reception and an awards gala dinner on March 19 at Newcastle Makati Hotel. Medals of recognition will be awarded to seven outstanding past presidents, and a special award will be bestowed on a Spanish company and individual based here in the Philippines for their role in the globalization of Spanish business. Among the evening's highlights is a video presentation of La Camara's history, which will feature interviews with some of its past presidents. A live band will provide dance music after the dinner, followed by a raffle of valuable prizes, which includes a Palawan Holiday Package for two, courtesy of Budget Travel and Tours. Tickets to the awards dinner are available at the Secretariat, 8890 9410.

Cosmopolitan Church anniversary

Cosmopolitan Church celebrates its 16th founding anniversary on March 29. There will be worship services at 10 a.m. and worship through music at 3 p.m. Preaching is on March 29, 10 a.m., is Bishop Daniel Bolito. Cosmopolitan Church is located at 1368 1st Avenue, Manila. Call 5314495.

Mastering life course

The first introductory lecture and course on Mastering Life Through Positive Change with Landon Carter, one of the top counselors/trainers for national trainers in the world, will be held March 13-14, 10 a.m.-10 p.m., at ABS Conference Center, cor. Benavidez and Trasierra Sts., Legaspi Village, Makati City. Bring two friends and watch get a 50 percent discount. A free one-hour lecture will be held March 11, 6 a.m.-10 p.m. at ABS Conference Center. To register, call 554 1804, 8900707, 899 849 3388 or 899 1818884.

Echessore seminars

Echessore will hold the following seminars this month: Boosting Caffeine Hours, March 18, 2-5 p.m., with Dirk Jose as speaker; Healthy and Nutritious, March 25, 2-5 p.m., Healthy Snacks, Empowering Women in Entrepreneurs, March 25, 6-9 p.m., Dirk Jose; Mindful Parenting. See to check Journey into Modern Day Achievement Parenting, March 29, 1-4 p.m. E-mail Stephanie at stephi@echessore.ph, call 0920 8224842 or 9213484.

Writing workshop

Designed by Words Matter's Workshop will hold Writing the Personal Essay on March 21 and 28, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., at Irony Bldg., 134 Katipunan, Loyola Heights, Quezon City. Call 5091805 e-mail dina.wordsmith@gmail.com.

Renewal of ties

Unchanted Kingdom (UK) recently renewed its ties with long-time partner International Event Exchange, Inc. (IEEI). Under the agreement, IEEI will be tasked to coordinate/handle through its Passport Plaza at UK, a tour package which includes an FR Day Pass and a round trip point-to-point shuttle service. It's tough this locally, pick goes from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao (one now have accessible means of going to UK in Santa Rosa, Laguna. A new to-do shuttle service will also be available. IEEI also offers e-ticketing services to its clients and then ordering and payment of tickets for its partners. From now until March 22, UK is open Thursdays until 10 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays, 11 a.m.-9 p.m., with fireworks display at 8 p.m. Call 8560111 to 18 or 810-7911 or e-mail marketing@unchanted.com.ph. Unchanted Kingdom is located at Santa Rosa, Laguna with sales office at the Ritmore Condominium, 322 Aguirre St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Cinematography workshop

Cinematographer Neil Daza will conduct a cinematography workshop on April 11-18 and 24-25, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., at Mowelfund Film Institute, Mowelfund Plaza, 60 Roces Drive, Cubao, Quezon City. Call 4298833.

LIFESTYLE Parenting

Fearsome Pacquiao not fearsome as parent

'I tend to give them what they want because I never got what I wanted as a child—not even food'

PACQUIAO holds 'Queen Elizabeth' upon their arrival from the US last month.

By Anna A. Jamboro

MANNY PACQUIAO MAY be the toughest man in the ring, but at home, the champion is party in the hands of his four adored kids.

The world boxing champion welcomed another girl into his family—Queen Elizabeth. His youngest daughter has just been christened in Pacquiao's hometown, General Santos City.

"I named her Queen Elizabeth because (she) already have a Princess in the family," says the PBC Man of the Year, beaming with pride. Princess is the third in the Pacquiao brood. The eldest is Jinnoel, 8, then Michael, 7.

Being a father is no easy job, Pacquiao admits. Being away from home often prompts him to overcompensate for his absence, not deaf for scenes to raise spoiled brats.

"I tend to give (what they want because I never got what I wanted as a child...not even food. There just wasn't enough money all the time," he explains.

Values

While Pacquiao happily relegates the task of child discipline to wife Jinkee, he sometimes rewards his children if a task is accomplished, such as cleaning up the room or putting the toys back on their shelves.

What do the kids usually ask for?

"Computers and toys. My two boys are especially good in computer games. Sometimes they beat me."

His children are developing love and appreciation for real sports. His two boys are into European soccer, probably an influence from Brent International School where they study. They're also into basketball.

Pacquiao picks up his children from school and plays basketball with them whenever possible. Upon arriving up, he goes straight to their bedrooms and gives them a hug.

PAGE/SEE 2A

THE 'QUEEN'

AGUSTIN Dorotan, Citi retail banking director

CITIGOLD wealth management director Judith Go (second from right) with Citi branch heads Jacqui Pflumlin, Emily Santos and Mylor Chua

CITICORP'S Ramon Nestor Tejero III, Marlon Joseph Chua Kun Shing, and, posing in from Singapore, Norman Villamin of Citi Global Consumer Bank and Global Wealth Management, Asia Pacific

MARK JONES, Citi country business manager

LYNDEN Lhuillier, Sip Consultancy, Gloria Ramirez and Lee Marquez

Bank clients given tips on how to attract luck and wealth

BEA Soriano

CHE MAGKILIGIN beauty editor Mahalo Reyes

COSMOPOLITAN editor-in-chief Za Aguila

FENDZ Reola

HONNICA Borromeo, Camille Garcia and Czeh David

HOSTS Bryan Javier and Karen Permisan

CITIGOLD CHEERED THE CHINESE New Year with another celebration.

Guests gathered at Le Pavillon to hear what's in store for 2009 and bring their fortunes.

Tips on how to lessen this difficult year ahead, palanggas, while attracting luck and wealth in the next twelve months, were given.

"There is a tremendous amount of media coverage, analyst reports and market commentary on what the global financial system has in store for us this New Year. Amidst this sensory-laden information, which sometimes leads to confusion, Citibank is here to help our clients cut through the clutter and make sense of all of this," said the dashing Mark Jones, country business manager of Citibank Philippines.

The host made sure their clients would feel "lush and luxurious" as they entered the venue, palanggas. Traditional Chinese music and Chinese Opera-inspired characters entertained guests.

The event also showcased a dragon dance and a circus presentation reminiscent of the carnivals of ancient China. Master Joseph Chua gave guests recommendations for 2009.

The highlight, palanggas, was a special raffle, where the lucky ones got premium Tanduay items, courtesy of event partner Tanduay Rhum.

For more info on Citigold Wealth Management, call 7979888 in Metro Manila, 1-800-1888-2484 in the provinces, or e-mail citigold.philippines@citi.com.

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New world-class resto

Cosmopolitan Manila now has a super posh, upscale restaurant and bar club that can serve as a posh and world-class clubs in St. Tropez, Monte Carlo, Paris and Miami. Called The Establishment, it was exquisitely designed by the creative Isaac Kleinhaus.

During its opening last week, our mind's most beautiful faces and a-listers and guests Joan Hong Bong, who joined in for this chi-chi happening, palanggas, were all present.

L'Oreal launch

L'Oreal Paris formally launched Men Expert. Tagged as "The Barber Kit's Find," the event at The Fort, Taguig, had the hottest and desirable hairdoers in our town, dahlings.

EIC's "Chill Spot" host Karen Permisan and model Brent Javier led the exciting program, palanggas. Apart from the games and prizes, sexy models and ushers were around for guys to sample the Men Expert skincare line. Product manager for L'Oreal Paris Skincare Ing Caballero said, "L'Oreal Paris Men Expert is already No. 1 in a lot of countries around Asia and Europe. Men Expert offers expert technology for every man's skin as well as for (him) looking skin. Now, Filipino men can enjoy perfect skin that only L'Oreal Paris can offer."

Free-flowing drinks were provided by hot sponsors Mo Bacardi, Magnum Ring, 42 Below and Jagermeister, while DJ Li Fridays took care of the mood-lowering finger foods.

Fab gift bags of Men Expert products were given to all the invitees.

The event was also presented by The Bachelor Suite, Discovery Suites, Fragrance Avenue, Diamonds for Men Fragrance and Heritage Hotel.

Colgate experience

Recently the Manolito Hotel was abuzz with Colgate Total Professional Clean's Experience the Pro Clean Difference.

Four ambassadors were chosen: news anchor Tricia Clemoglione; Cebu-born fashion designer and musician Kate Torralba; certified sports nutritionist Jimmy Sullivan and restaurateur (10 Cuff and Chelsea) Andrej Mlinarevski. "All these contacts combined will probably cover a majority of the country's premium market," explained Leah Cariaga during lunch, palanggas.

Each ambassador and the media invitees were asked to fill up the bars with names of who enjoy and appreciate the "professional clean" feeling, in between visits to the dentist.

Which, actually I didn't do, shhh. It's easier for me to go to the supermarket and buy Colgate Total Professional Clean, than fill in all those blanks I saw in the referral list, palanggas.

Call 0917-8336888, 6286972 or e-mail leah.cariaga@greenbelfpe.com.

HANA Tajima, Ayumi Kinoshita and Yuki Matsuzaki

COSMOPOLITAN Manila's newest world-class restaurant and bar, The Establishment at The Fort

RESTAURANT FEUR (10 Cuff and Chelsea) Andrej Mlinarevski

SPORTS aficionado Jimmy Bullos fills out his referral form.

TOBY Quitmeyer, Colgate associate marketing director for oral care; Giselle Hinada, Total Professional Clean product manager; and Edith Marquez-Reyes, category manager

NEWS anchor Tricia Clemoglione, Colgate ambassador

REVELATIONS WITH JOURNEY AT SM

Moviegoers had a first glimpse of the excitement that awaits them when the legendary rock band Journey made a second stop at The Block at SM City North EDSA. The group will rock Manila with Journey: The Revelation, its first concert here in the Philippines on Saturday, March 14 at the Seaside Boulevard of the SM Mall of Asia Complex.

During the press conference, Journey members Neil Schon, Jonathan Cain, Ross Valory, and Deen Castronovo gamely answered questions together with their newest member, our very own Arnel Pineda. Fans were thrilled and looked forward to their upcoming concert at the SM Mall of Asia.

Journey was formed in San Francisco, California in 1973, and for the past three decades has scored two Gold, three Platinum, and eight Multi-Platinum albums, seven of which were straight hits from 1978-1987. Their singers for most songs like Don't Stop Believing, Open Arms, Faithfully, and Separate Ways, they have had 18 Top 40 singles, six of which have reached the Top Ten in the Billboard Hot 100 Chart.

During their performance at the SM Mall of Asia grounds, the group will introduce their new album, Revelation, which will bookmark one of the most challenging chapters of the band's legendary career. The new album offers a lasting testament to Journey's legacy and a striking glimpse of their brilliant future.

Here are some revelations gathered from Journey members during the Q and A portion of the press conference.

Arnel Pineda

Q: Is singing with the group still a job or more of a hobby now?

Arnel: Singing with these guys is the best privilege, and I will sing with them as long as they want me to.

The Legendary Rock Band, Journey at the Block at SM City North EDSA

Q: What can you say about Arnel being the new lead singer of Journey?

Ross: Arnel brings a brand new energy on stage as well as a motivational presence now in Journey.

Neil: We had reborn, we had very fortunate to have found Arnel.

Deen: He's also brings a new sentiment.

Jonathan: He is a cool guy and we get along together as bandmates! He speaks good English. I know that [the] English teachers are in the Philippines.

Ross Valory

Q: Since you are always changing your lead singers, how do you maintain the nature or quality of your music?

Ross: Our songs are bigger than our group, even if we change our singers, our music lives on.

Jonathan Cain

Q: What makes your songs different?

Jonathan: We don't sing necessary songs.

Neal Schon

Q: How are you preparing your music for the new generation?

Neal: We received Grammy's, Platinum awards since 1978, and our songs are still selling today. The new generation still appreciates our songs and we are pleased with.

Deen Castronovo

Q: This is your first time to have a concert in the Philippines and you are also performing in the Philippines in Asia. How do you feel about it?

Deen: I had always been our dream to perform here in the Philippines, and we are happy that through Arnel, it has come true.

The SM Mall of Asia, the premiere destination mall in the Asia Pacific region, is emerging as a choice venue for international performances. Boyz Jamaar, the YouTube sensation recently rocked the mall with a Valentine's Day Concert. And with the upcoming performance by Journey to also be gracing on the mall into a new phase. Don't miss Journey: The Revelation on March 14 at 8:00 PM at the Seaside Boulevard of the SM Mall of Asia.

'BAON' OF THE WEEK

GRILLED Cheese and Tomato Sandwich

Jazz up cheese sandwich

By Norea Oblianco
Contributor

A GRILLED CHEESE SANDWICH MAKES an easy, delicious snack or lunch for kids and grownups alike. Here's a way to jazz it up. Use a different kind of cheese and add sun-dried tomatoes. Mozzarella cheese makes this sandwich taste like pizza while Gruyere cheese gives it a slightly tangy flavor. Go for other kinds, for sure, cheese lovers: add sweetness and tartness that complements the cheese's saltiness.

Mozzarella cheese is available at supermarkets. Look for Gruyere cheese at delicatessens such as Santi's and Gallito.

Upgraded Grilled Cheese Sandwich

Makes two sandwiches

Cooking oil for brushing or nonstick cooking spray

4 slices sandwich bread

2 tbsp softened butter

2 slices Mozzarella or Gruyere cheese

4 pieces sun-dried tomatoes

Brush a grill pan lightly with oil or spray pan with nonstick cooking spray then heat pan or medium temperature. Brush one side of each bread slice with softened butter. Arrange a slice of cheese and two pieces sun-dried tomatoes on the unbuttered side of one slice of bread (the buttered side should face outward). Top with a bread slice, buttered side also facing outward. Press with a spatula to flatten slightly.

Repeat with remaining bread, butter, cheese and tomatoes.

Grill for about one to two minutes on buttered part, buttered side down, pressing further with heated spatula or pancake turner to flatten bread and seal the fillings. Turn the bread over and grill other side similarly.

Remove from pan and slice each sandwich into two, diagonally if desired. Wrap in foil or grease-proof paper and pack to lunch bag.

Tips

✦ Instead of a grill pan, grill the sandwich in a sandwich maker. Or use a Panini maker if you have one. A Panini maker flattens the sandwich while it's being grilled so there's no need to press with a spatula.

✦ You can also cook the sandwich in a skillet. Brush skillet well with butter or cooking oil before putting in the sandwich so the bread doesn't stick.

✦ If you're using sun-dried tomatoes that have been bottled in oil, wipe the tomatoes dry with paper towels before using them to keep the bread from being oily and soggy. If the sun-dried tomatoes are the dry kind, rehydrate them in warm water for about five minutes then wipe dry with paper towels before using.

LET your newborn sleep in comfort with this quilted Disney Baby bedding set.

Choosing bed linen for baby

BABIES SPEND A LOT OF TIME SLEEPING during their formative months, and it would do well for doting moms and dads to make sure they sleep comfortably and peacefully.

Bed linens are often the closest to baby's skin and choosing the right stuff is important during their early months. Baby Company, the baby specialist, has a wide array of quality beddings for your nursery. Ranging from one-piece sets to bedding separates, these are available in many colorful and eye-catching designs. Linens with well-loved cartoon characters, cute alphabet shapes, teddy bears and animals, and colorful tea and rosies designs from Rockinet Baby, Disney Baby, Owen and Cortlo will keep baby entertained or slumber time.

Here are some tips on choosing bed linen from Baby Company:

■ Look for beddings that are soft since these touch baby's skin. These must be made with quality materials, such as knit or woven cotton with a high thread count.

■ Make sure the thickness of the blanket is right for baby's temperament, as well as the nursery room's temperature to make baby sleep comfortably.

■ Check if baby's beddings match the size of the crib mattress, since these should fit snugly for baby's safety. To keep the sheets in place, slip elastic straps in the crib sheet under the mattress.

■ Have at least an extra sheet of beddings on hand. Babies tend to make a lot of mess during the early months, and it's important to have the sheets clean all the time.

■ Make sure the fabric of the beddings can be easily washed. Also, a plastic mattress cover can be placed under the sheet to keep the mattress dry.

■ As babies begin to respond to colors and shapes, eye-catching beddings are a good option.

Bed linens are available at Baby Company at all SM Department Stores and specialty stores at The Podium, Power Plant Mall and The Annex at SM City North Edsa.

THIS Disney Baby crib set includes a comforter, fitted sheet, head pillow and two bolsters.

BABY will have a good night's sleep with this crib set from Baby Company.

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Fearsome Pacquiao . . .

From page B1

He also tries to instill in them Filipino values, instilling his own struggle of rising above poverty, so that his children would learn the value of hard work.

"When I'm home I watch over my children. I teach them how to pray and to be always thankful to God for everything. They pray in the morning, before meals, and before sleeping. I teach them the power of prayer and value of faith. Every Sunday my family goes to church," Pacquiao says.

Fears

There is no boxing equipment in his home because, like regular dads, Pacquiao has fears—for instance, that one of his children might grow up to be a boxer. A boxer's life is harsh and brutal, which he doesn't want to pass on to his kids. Boxer-his-training and workouts are held outside his home.

I do boxing [workouts] in a mansion on TV [because of what they're seen, Pacquiao says, some see his home shown] internet in becoming a boxer.

"Sometimes I joke around and ask them what happened to De La Hoya. But my children feel for me each time they see my bruises. Now both boys say they don't want to become boxers because it is a painful job," he says.

Education is the best gift he can give his children, he says. His big friend Chal while growing up, Pacquiao, now enrolled in Business Management at Notre Dame University, feels that all the money in the world will not give character and depth to a person if he or she is not well-learned.

"I want my children to grow up as responsible, educated people. I want them to be conscious in many subjects. I don't want them to feel insecure because they have nothing substantial to say in a conversation," he says.

ENTERTAINMENT

ADIOS AMIGOS
At long last, the Eraserheads (clockwise, from top left—Buddy Zabala, Ely Buendia, Marcus Adoro and Raimund Marasigan—mark a group hug and an every-five final concert. Story on E6.

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A more . . .

From page E4

dance, hyped by promoters as having breached the 100,000-barrier, soon bouncing along the toughest 10m song.

After a 26-minute break, the band was literally lifted from under the stage to a cozy, acoustic setup.

"Should you like our new house?" Buendia quipped, as he and the band sat comfortably on a leather couch.

They then performed "Tikman" (after which, Buendia joked, "If you have any requests, write them on a one-fourth sheet of paper, lengthwise"), "Hating Multo" and "Pare Pare."

In "Pare Ko," Buendia—as he did all night—let the crowd fill in for him some of the song's parts. The rest of the band chanted the stage and Nitobe, on keyboards, tattooed Buendia into "Batlas."

The whole band then got back for "Buko Jolo," "Trip to Jerusalem" and "Spoliarium," before moseying the scene on another hallucinatory bit that left the audience guessing—until Buendia sang "Swordfish."

A stream of fireworks unraveled from the stage roof as the final strains played out, after which, Buendia clasped his hands above his head and yelled: "We are the fireworkers, thank you and good night!"

But everybody knew that it wasn't over yet.

Dedicated to Francis

The day before, Francis M, a close friend of the band who collaborated on "Superpinoy," died of complications from leukemia. He was supposed to jam on the song, and the E-heads promised to dedicate the gig to a dear departed friend.

And so, seven minutes after leaving the stage, they were back again and opened their encore with the familiar intro to "Superpinoy."

The band then profiamed another crowd favorite, "Minamo," then tweaked around again with "Alipato," before driving the audience into a frenzy by playing the familiar tunnin of a tune the crowd could not put a finger on. A few notes later, it became recognizable: Francis M's very own "Kahidlasnipa World."

If the intro to that track was familiar, it was because the E-Heads used the same key that led to the next song, the ultra-popular "Ang Huling El Bimbo."

The crowd then thought it was all over, but Marsalgan came out from backstage to sing three more songs in succession.

"Okay, three more for the road," Buendia said. Unrehearsed versions of "Lagaw," "Sembreak" and "Kyoing" delighted the crowd, which didn't seem to mind a few missed notes and forgotten lyrics.

Past 11 p.m., a little over three hours after taking the stage, the four Eraserheads formally dissolved into their respective career paths again.

It would probably take a whole new album to mount a third reunion concert—otherwise anything, after the "Final Set" would sound like one big outlet.

Ogie dresses . . .

From page E4

tics mixed up. Nino, Heidi, Bianca and Vince are an awesome foursome. Couples that party together stay together.

Friends-turned-rivals

One of Korea's drama series that became a phenomenal hit worldwide, "All About Eve," now has a Pinoy adaptation. Airing weeknights on GMA 7's Telebabad block, it's about women from two different generations who are friends-turned-rivals because of their dreams and love affairs. It stars Richard Gomez, Rafa Siddot, Jean Garcia, Alfred Vargas, Sunshine Dizon, Mark Anthony Fernandez and Iza Calzado.

Speaking of romance, here are Alfred's and Iza's thoughts about it: Says Iza, "I'm not into deep-deep gorgeous men. I go for beautiful souls." Says Alfred, "Even if you are committed to each other, you should allow your partner grow to the max for a healthy relationship. Nobody solely revolves around each other."

There is no "All About Eve," so you'll have how to handle the "forbidden fruits" in your little corner of paradise.

Raining men

Grab a copy of Metro Society's annual men issue, featuring the Youngblood bachelors, best dressed men, men in suits, Las Tamaraws polo team and Pseudonym Edward Meadbe. It's raining men from cover to cover.

Charity run

A lot of celebrities are all set to participate in the "Run for Their Lives" charity event on March 15 at Bonifacio for the Gift of Life Foundation, which has already saved the lives of 126 indigent children born with congenital heart defects.

Pass the word around and we'll make as many little hearts murmur with joy (www.ogie-alcasid.blogspot.com).

PERSONAL: Thanks a mil to my sentimental American director friend Robert Lenzo for an awesome weekend in Delaware. Wish I could frame time when I'm with you, Rob.

E-mail ogiesblog@abs-cbn.com

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WATCHMEN

A more casual, fun 'Final Set'

By Francis TJ. Ochoa
Photos by Jim Soton Pantaleon

RAMPAGE: Mariangel and Buddy Zabala

STRIPPED OF BOTH mush and magic, the second Esinero heads reunion concert dubbed "The Final Set" held Saturday at the SM Mall of Asia open-air grounds was a technically superior version of its predecessor last year. And this time, the band managed to dig through the residue of an old friendship to make the whole event look more casual, less contrived.

ELT Buendia and Marcus Adoro

The openers ticked off by the alphabet in reverse until it stopped at "L," unsatisfied one thing: There was no magical lift to carry the band up the stage. No attempt whatsoever to encapsulate the spine-tingling emotion of the first reunion gig.

Immediately the band plunged into "Majesty" and right away you knew that this concert was going to be better. For one, the sound system held its own despite fears that the unyielding winds from Manila Bay would wreak some kind of havoc on the acoustics of an already open venue.

The next number, "Walang Naghago," had curmudgeon-faced pilot-haircut rocking into lines Ely Buendia belted out: "Kung ano ngayon mamaya gusto pa rin ngayon." This was followed by an acidulous take that prompted Buendia to joke with the crowd: "Same thing same." It turned out to be "Melting Alaska." And indeed, not a few in the audience thought the song wrong.

Buendia was actually having fun with the crowd. The few requests that were shouted a lot for the nightly by which the E-Heads went about with their routine, prompting apologies to which Ely the band members.

"We're not really the type of band that talks a lot," drummer Raimund Marasigan said during a pre-encore press briefing. Buendia, on the other hand, reminded people during that same press con that the E-Heads weren't necessarily a good live band.

REVIEW

Fascinating night, though, they were really good.

Buendia was animated, prompting a few members of the audience to remark, "Ambot dahan-dahan lang Ely baka di na sya namin maipun-itu," a reference to his heart problem that prompted the first gig to be snapped midway.

As he jumped around and tossed his jacket to the crowd, the band proceeded with "Binibini," "Poor Man's Grave" and "Waiting for the Bus." The crowd began chanting the new favorite "group hug" request, to which Buendia replied, "Kaya mamo!"

The first surprise came when Jazz Nicolas, the now acknowledged fifth E-Head also known as "Inbetweener" do everything guy took over at encores' from Marasigan and guitarist Marcus Adoro knocked out the next song. Turned out that Buendia would take a break from singing chores as Marcus launched a reggae version of "Ang Ala Kang Bancog at Akin."

It could win an award for most refreshing performance, if there was one.

Buendia then introduced Marasigan as the new vocalist/drinkbuddies. The fandemik front man performed "Slow Me" and "Mikmik." A few lines into the intro, Marasigan asked the band to stop.

"Dapat tuesday siya," he urged the crowd. And when the audience obliged, the earth literally shook, it could remove ripples across the venue as the au-

A ENTERTAINMENT

VIDEO PG-13

Ogie dresses up like a woman—again

IT WAS SUCH A DELIGHT TO interview Ogie Alcasid for my daily show "Chikaserye" with IC on Viva Cinema Channel. He's trying to shoot "OMG (Oh My God)" with Judy Ann Santos.

"It's Regine who came up with the story line," said Ogie. "It will be hilarious because in some scenes I will dress up like a woman again, like in 'Temptation 2.' But this time, I'm not portraying a gay role. It's just a disguise so that I could win back Jodi in the movie."

Has he done anything extreme like that for love in real life? "When I fought and I had a little temptation, I took her shopping in Louis Vuitton. (Mich-mich ko ay ang lungsonin ang bill kaagad.) I also gave her a heart shaped diamond necklace without even asking the price. But I believe you can never overdo anything if it's for someone you love," if Ogie's heart is to it, the sky's the limit!

Remembering Francis

My deepest condolences to the family of Francis Magalona. Kiko is the envoy of the eldest daughter Hannah. Even if he didn't get to see her much, he would always ask me how Hannah is every time we exchange text messages. Does Hannah want to emulate when Kiko sent her autographed copies of all his CDs.

DOLLY WOOD
Dolly Anne Carvajal

Even if not every Pinoy was lucky to get Kiko's autograph, his name is already imprinted in the hearts of his "Mga Kaibigan." He sings itself Pinoy pride and makes us really listen as we won't drown in the basis of foreign music.

Mixed up

My apologies to the audience when Shaina Magdayao and Paulo Avelino mixed up their lines in the previous column that the owner of Restaurante Gonzalez's new love is Kristine Hermosa's boyfriend is Paulo's business partner Vince Santos and not Richard.

The last habitat who swiped the info to me got their identi-

MORE ON PAGE B

ENTERTAINMENT

Robin Padilla worries about his children

By Marinel R. Cruz

IF HE HAD HIS WAY, ACTOR Robin Padilla said he would not allow his daughters to visit war-ravaged areas in Mindanao.

Robin, a Muslim convert, made this statement during the press launch of DMA Films' suspense thriller "Sando," in which he plays a resigned military operative gifted with a third eye.

His daughters Queenie, 17, and Kylie, 15, have likewise endeared themselves to showbiz.

In September last year, Queenie joined a relief operation in Shark Cotabato and Maguindanao in Mindanao, where villages were displaced by armed clashes between the government and the Moro National Liberation Front.

Kylie, who vies for a part of her dad's fantasy drama series "Kampin Barkada," also expressed interest in visiting war-torn areas in the south.

"Dalhada ang pamamia nun," Robin told Inquirer Entertainment. "Ang sige Ate ngayon, hindi akun nilang sama ah, ipagkakaiti nila," he explained.

What would you have your children do?

Gusto ko sanamal ang gano'ng klase nila na mag-aral ako, tapos makipag-usap, di Kylie, gano'n yung mga-aral ah kaya nangil'an pag sa ibang ngayon.

Guys are starting to show interest in Queenie now.

Hindi ko alam. Bata bata. Pero dapat sa kanya ako aconsider. Dapat macling at magalang sa'kin.

Opening This Week

The Longest One Night Stands

Stars Christopher Castaneda, Singko Palileo, Gem Cabrera

Directed by Eduardo Roy Jr., Criseldo Pablo, Hachi Estrada-ugh

Four short films are woven together "Miss Waiter Wait" and "Sarah" by Pablo; "Rahel" by Estrada-ugh; and "Ang Pinakamahabang One Night Stand" by Roy. This omnibus gay drama was showcased at the first Queerfinity film fest. It is billed by filmmakers as a "funny, feisty, naughty and delightful exhibition of stories about one long, sweltering night." Showing in Indefilm Robinson Galleria.

Revolutionary Road

Stars Leonardo DiCaprio, Kate Winslet, Michael Shannon, Kathryn Hahn

Directed by Sam Mendes

Based on Richard Yates' novel, this drama fo-

GARFIELD

A. LIPAN

FUGAO BABOY

DICK TRACY

LOVEHONOTS

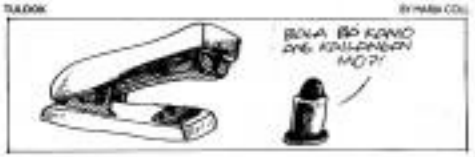
JAMES BOND

DIVINE COMEDY

BABY BLUES

ATOMO AND WEBOY

TULOOK



RIKO MACHINE

BEN

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 TALK-A-LOT
5 St. Louis gal
9 1977 3D game woman Liberty ___ (Atari 2600)
13 1 BC-ish game
14 ___ Vista (web editor)
15 Fifa
17 Broadway impersonator
19 Benedictine and Galliano
20 Nautical rescue system
21 Colorado river
23 NASA subject
24 Widespread
25 Actress Andrews
27 Mr. Horne
30 Kept from the public
31 Sick building syndrome
32 Entertainment Weekly
33 Mayan god, by another name
35 Angry
41 Employment
43 Peak
44 Approximately, mathematically
46 Heave
47 Soft drink additive
48 Unnecessarily exciting
50 Ten Lbs.
51 C.S.A. soldier
52 School lifeboard
53 Farming or "Man on Fire" star
56 Tall shelf
60 Commanding hands
61 Launch
62 Lack or need
63 NHC newscaster
64 Wimbledon locale
65 Entrance's partner
66 Rice varieties
67 ___ do-well

DOWN
1 Ring or medal
2 Andrew Fitzgerald (1920-1940's)
3 Shark and Bradley
4 "Bath" singers
5 Shakespeare's gambling agent
6 Colorful feathers
7 Pod, and feelings
8 Weapons and tanks
9 Razor choice
10 Blond-headed Mr. Horne
11 ___ de cuisine
12 Rich of CBS?
16 Flights to Dublin
18 Directional suffix
22 Rear in Reims
26 Bribery accounts
28 Spoil and solve endings
29 Words of scared followers
31 Stressed
33 Biographer of TDT
34 Prayer ring
36 Fat part of a gem
37 Radical food fad
38 Lying god
39 Computer storage
40 Cell cutter
42 Cuban export
45 Winter warmer?
53 Trellised
54 Hotel chain
55 Long gun
57 Sonnet
58 Ending with Mach-
59 Ending with Mach-

By Jon Vito
Castle City, FL

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

ARIES (March 21 to April 20): Mars in Aries. This is a marvelous day for your sign! All group activities, and also activities with friends will start to roll, and expectations will be higher than usual, and upheld. You may...

TAURUS (April 20 to May 21): Mercury in Taurus is beautiful compared to the rough and tumble Aries. Venus went periodically on a plan. It could provide you with a chance to meet someone special. Be careful. Be emotionally in control this way.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21): It's a busy day for you! Enjoy the company of people from different backgrounds and cultures. Be open to people you meet now, but expect your opinions to remain the same.

CANCER (June 21 to July 23): Someone with your best interests at heart is going to offer you a chance to meet. Be careful. Make a good impression. Be yourself.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 23): An exciting meeting or education. Studies, publications, and communications are favored. Be careful and like that are lucky for you to...

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 23): Be careful with your words. Be careful with your words. Be careful with your words.

Robin Padilla worries . . .

From page F1

Director Topel Lee said a different Robin Padilla would be seen in "Sundo." How is it different from your other performances?

Marami po. Talagang binantayan ni direk at ng aming cinematographer ang bawat kilos ko. Ayaw nila ng kapaitan sa iba. Ang mayroon akong nakitang pinaiba ko noon ay malagay sa tamang lugar.

You have action scenes here, too?

Ako naman ng pulikang may mapapamalo kapag may gawa sa Mindanao. Nagpapapel po ako ng papel ng libertino para impute pamisahin. Isang pulpolang napakomikal.

We heard you had to watch a lot of bourse (B/Ns).

Ahang nakasanlang DVD ito eko, samajal na ako. Parang hindi nakatulog si ako. Pero masaki nilang ikinit sa ito, mag-enjoyment. Ito ito mangyan sa kinagagawad kong trabahop na.

"Sundo" also features Jaydalyn Hinn, Mikki Reeves, Martina Stahl, Nino Angeles and Mark Bautista. It will open in local theaters on March 18.

E-mail: movies@inquirer.com.ph

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Interested parties may contact the Marketing Services Department at 901-3145 local 250 and 341

Opening This Week

From page F1

comes on a milestone couple (DiCaprio, Winslet) whose married life is slowly succumbing. Angie Errigo of Empire wrote that it's "handsomely done and beautifully acted ... affirm-depressing." Dave Calhoun of Time Out agrees: "A subdued, well-observed film." Stephen Hunter of Daily Telegraph observes: It's "tasteful, controlled and ultimately uncurved bore." Reviewed by Ayala Christian.

Race to Witch Mountain

Stars: Dwayne Johnson, Annabeth Gish, Carla Gugino, Garret Wang, Alexander Ludwig

Directed by: Andy Fickman

Inspired by a 1975 Disney classic, Alcatraz Zick puts a sad driver (Johnson) and two kids with supernatural powers (Robb, Ludwig) who must stop an alien invasion. Critic Christian says it's up as "a cheesy good time ... silly, but a movie that everyone can enjoy." Entertainment Weekly's Gleiberman describes it as a "C[illegible] actioner." Hollywood.com calls it a "kiddie action-adventure." Opens March 13.

Taken

Stars: Liam Neeson, Maggie Grace, Famke Janssen, Xander Berkeley

Directed by: Pierre Morel

A CIA agent (Neeson) battles with Europeans gangsters to rescue his daughter (Grace) kidnapped in a white-slavery ring. David Edelstein of New York magazine points out: "Big, dolorous Neeson makes the movie a keeper." Anthony Lane of New Yorker concurs: "Until, performance to the more permitting thing in the film." Reader Dudar of San Francisco Examiner dismisses it as a "hard sham ... slick and soulless."

Lagoon Cinemas
Gateway Mall Cinemas
Robinsons Movieworld
Eastwood Cinemas
Fairlane Cinemas
Megamall Cinemas

Gateway CINEMA 10
Mall CINEPLEX 4

JONAS BROTHERS 3D 1:30 4:30 7:30 10:30
HANCOCK 1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00
SHAOLIN GIRLS 2:30 4:30 7:30 10:30
YOU CHANGED MY LIFE 1:30 4:30 7:30 10:30
HANCOCK 2:30 5:30 8:30
STREET FIGHTER 1:30 4:30 7:30 10:30
BATMAN 3:00 6:00 9:00
SHAOLIN GIRLS 1:30 4:30 7:30 10:30
RACE TO WITCH MOUNTAIN 1:30 3:30 5:30 7:30 9:30
PLATINUM CINEMA
WATCHMEN 5:00 8:30
UNDOA 1:30 3:30 5:30 7:30 9:30
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NOKIA

MTRCB MTRCB ALL AGES ADMITTED
DWAYNE JOHNSON
RACE TO WITCH MOUNTAIN
THE RACE IS ON
OPENS FRIDAY, MARCH 13

THE NO.1 MOVIE IN THE U.S.
THEY'VE TAKEN HIS DAUGHTER.
NOW, HE'S TAKING THEM DOWN.
I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU WANT
BUT IF YOU DON'T LET MY DAUGHTER GO
I WILL FIND YOU... I WILL KILL YOU
LIAM NEESON
TAKEN
FROM THE WRITER-PRODUCER OF "THE TRANSPORTER"
OPENS TODAY

Pia Magalona 'coping well enough' with Kiko's death

By the Inquirer
and Inquirer.net staff

NOT KNOWING THAT HE WAS IN the presence of a Popular Star, a US consul unleashed a barrage of rude remarks.

The immigration officer questioned Pilo's decision to bring lots of cash for her calendar screenings. "I'm responsible for a lot of people in this trip," Pilo explained.

"Haven't you heard of credit cards," the consul asked, sarcastically.

Pilo provided, Pi opened her wallet, flashing dozens of credit cards.

RUSHES

For the first time, the chatty consul was at a loss for words.

Cold treatment

A Pinoy Idol reportedly gave some Alaska-based Filipinos the cold treatment.

According to a cook, Pi displeased the fans when she refused to meet, greet and sign autographs after a concert.

Accolades, however, poured out that it wasn't Pi's fault.

"Pi's father is the contractor," said a source.

Two Lord Divo have the same crossover expansion of mobbing US-based Filipino fans—the same people who spend hard-earned money to watch their shows.

Joey meets Mikhig

Award-winning filmmaker Jose Javier Reyes has signed up with the cable TV channel Mikhig.

His first job as creative director is to oversee its tie-up with music-video giant Channel [illegible].

Reyes is still in charge of the forthcoming MMFF-CBN comedy show "Buddy and Gerl," starring Jody Ann Santos as Buddy and Daniel Fajnes Agoncillo as Gerl.

Golden parachute for most

After a hasty departure, Show Biz Inc. reportedly "dissolved" a sweet, heart-lined loan for boosters.

Golden parachute allegedly includes lots of swedish XBE ol. so wants his service vehicle for himself—a luxury car from Germany?

Repeat performance

Joaquin Garcia, the second Filipino after Jed Madela to bring home two gold medals (Original Composition, Overall Champion) from the World Championship of the Performing Arts, stages a repeat of his gig tonight at the Library Down on Makati Ave.

Amy in trouble again

LONDON—British singer Amy Winehouse will not get a work visa to travel to the United States in time to perform at a leading music festival because she was charged with assault last week, her spokesman said on Monday.

Winehouse, 25, had been expected to perform at the annual Coachella festival in California, where she was due to be seen including Neil McCartney and [illegible]

The Killers. She was set to sing on April 18.

The soul singer, who won five Grammy awards in 2008, was charged with common assault following an incident at a hall in London's Berkeley Square last June 4, hearing on the case is set on March 17 at Westminster Magistrates' Court. Reuters

This is no joke

HAHAHAHAL Thomasser — funds from being a comedian, actor, playwright, author, musician, an influencer, juggler and magician, Steve Martin's latest feat is "The Crow: New Songs for the Five-String Banjo" — his first full album of music.

The disc is no joke. Martin serves as co-wrote all 15 tracks; only one of which is overtly comedic. AP

***

Top of the talk shows

For those who missed last weekend's gabbers on TV (And who we are moved, I we are moved.)

● On Magalona on coping with heartache/Cassie Magalona's death:

"I think I'm coping well enough because I've been prepared sooner for this. By the grace of God, He made a way para mas dapatan ko to."

● Andrew E. on his with Pennsylvania sweetheart Drew:

"Sabi ko nga sabi ko nga, nga-hulat ng dawit ... I asked him, 'Kat napansin ko wala siyang kamesa, as Gramsing to, 'Mly Gramsing ko ang sinabi ko ba?' Sabi niya wala. Parati ko sabing magpakabang sinabi sa kanya? I'm obliged and said yes."

● Mark Anthony Fernandez on mother Alma Moreno reported wedding to a billionaire-based politician:

"Kita ko yung glow ... Always ako sa mama ko. Walang problema kung Muslim siya o dalit ano pang religion niya. Ingat ako sa ang magsasama ko dito dahil yung gay para I just as the first yung siyempre may religious differences siguro pero, diba't a big deal ... as I'm happy sa nagyong ang sabi ng mama ko."

● GMA 7 reporter Pilmar Calimoso on Annabelle Rama's tricksters:

"Sir ndesis ser okay. Sabi Judiegan pa siyang nangyari what they're all in place? ... bang kung nagbigay siya ng mga regalo at kahit na sino, alam na Gloria, at na capacity, yun, na, nakakita siya kaya ng gusto niya ... Hindi mahilig ang mga kaka ng kahit na anong affairs dito sa GMA."

● Annabelle's threat to GMA7 that remarried her ailing JC de Vera:

"Sandali lang ha ang lahat. March 14, yung wala pa siyang dalagay na project. Ang JC, pareo, mag-abalahanin na sila." (Promise?)

● John Lloyd Cruz on being a fan of Sen Kiko:

"I'm not comfortable. It scares me. Kasi yung number one ka, strong-armed dun? Alaska na yun. Pinakamalapit. Komportable ako kung nasaan ako. Mandito ako at dapat na ito, pinapasok ko yung pinakagusto kong pinapasok sa buhay. If you're number one, love, from, hindi ko pwedeng. Hindi mga mo-matter sa yo." (Ego na nga.)

Starstill, The Buzz

CANDIDATE No. 13, Sandra Inez Seifert

For her, 13 is an unlucky number

By Armin Rabas

IF THE NUMBER 13 IS BELIEVED TO bring bad luck, the omnipresent hovering that loomed at the Binibining Pilipinas pageant was coincidentally missing on coronation night last Saturday as the Araneta Coliseum.

The candidate, Sandra Inez Seifert, was disqualified two days prior to the event for having posed in the men's magazine mine.

But Seifert was with her family as part of the audience in the big throne. "Ok, already have tickets, so we might as well watch," Seifert told the reporter. "It's a good show, they treated me very well [before the disqualification]."

Heavy favorite

Seifert, a New York-educated registered nurse and former host on the GMA 7 late night program "Sabihing Totoo," was a heavy favorite and entered as a dress in the Ms. Philippine Universe title.

The crown eventually went to Pamela Bianca Manalo, a flight attendant who holds an advertising degree from the Assumption College.

"I was quite surprised," Seifert said of the results. "But [only us] we were asked who's our personal top—Dave Bautista wrote, and two of the girls got it—Melody Gersbach and Bianca Manalo. I was the dark one [is my pick]." Gersbach was crowned Ms. Philippine-International and Manalo, Ms. Philippine Universe.

The 5-foot-8 Filipino-German said her disqualification has opened a new chapter. "I've been asked to join other pageants and show business. I've also been asked to join Miss Germany. But I don't know yet, we'll see. I'll just take it one step at a time."